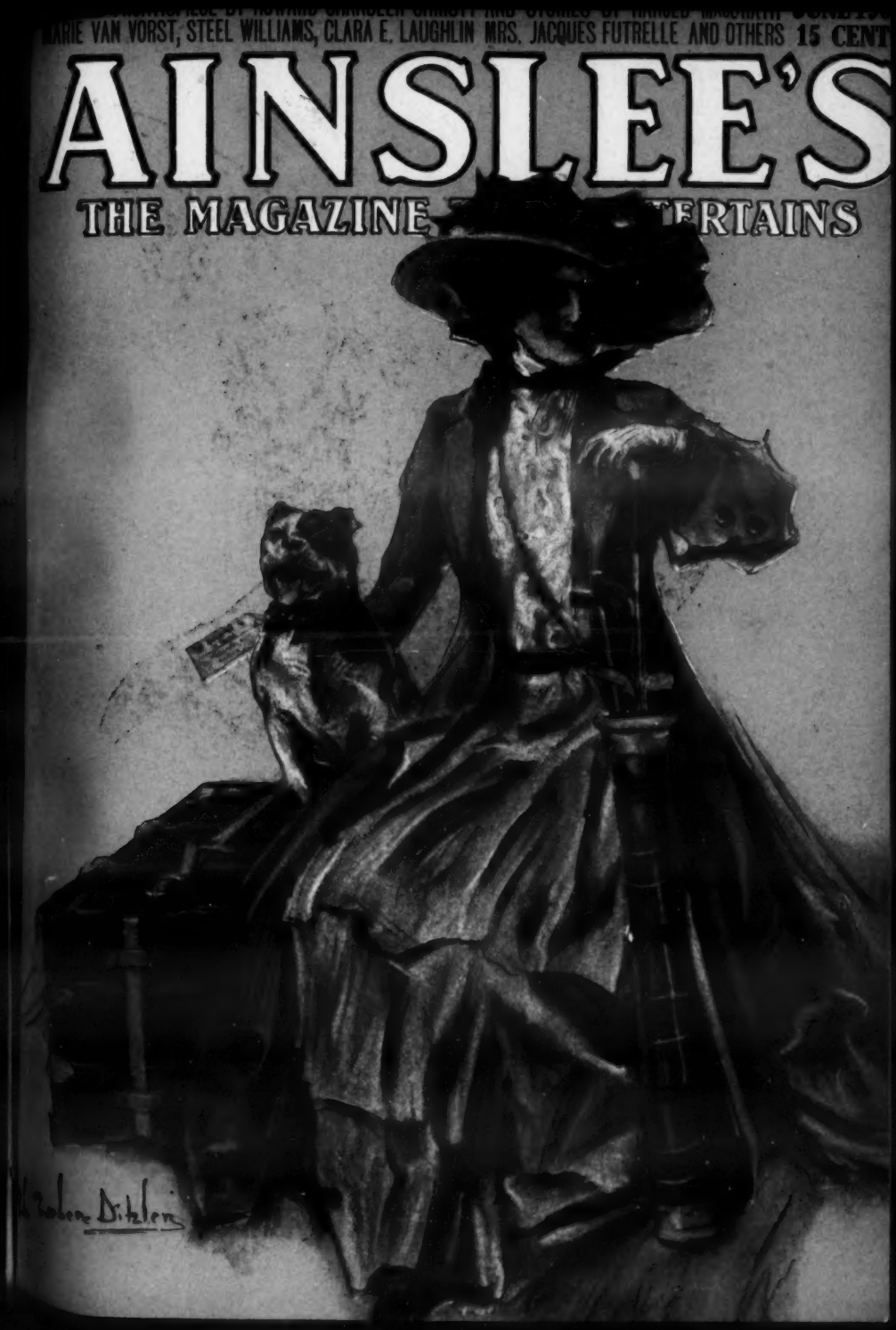


V23-5 JUN 09 XUM



HOW FOOLISH IT IS
TO WASTE NEEDED ENERGY WHEN
SAPOLIO
CLEANS SCOURS POLISHES

Victrola



Victrola XVI

Circassian walnut, $250
Mahogany - $200
Quartered oak, $200
The *Victrola* contains albums for 150 records and drawer for accessories.

Other styles of the Victor from $10 up

The most wonderful of all musical instruments

The new style Victor.

The *Victrola* is the greatest advance made in any musical instrument since the Victor was invented. An entirely new type on an improved principle; not a mere concealing cabinet.

The *Victrola* is complete in itself.

The sounding board surface amplifies and reflects the tone waves, and the melody issues from behind the modifying doors, loud or soft, as desired.

Simple and elegant in design, the *Victrola* is specially constructed to make the beautiful Victor music—clear and natural as it was before—richer, sweeter, and more lifelike than ever.

There is nothing else like the *Victrola*.

See and hear the *Victrola* at the nearest Victor dealer's.

Write to us for complete catalogues of the *Victrola* and *Victor Records*, and for name of the nearest Victor dealer.

Victor Talking Machine Co., Camden, N.J., U.S.A.
Berliner Gramophone Co., Montreal, Canadian Distributors

To get best results, use only Victor Needles on Victor Records



A complete list of new Victor Records for June will be found in the June number of Munsey's, Scribner's, McClure's, Century, Everybody's, Pacific Monthly and July Cosmopolitan.

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

AINSLEE'S FOR JULY

"THE MAGAZINE THAT ENTERTAINS"

THE RED FLAG By Edith Macvane

This is the complete novel, but it is not, as might be inferred from the title, a story of rioting and dynamite. It is a story of a duel of wits between two women involving, it is true, possibilities of violence which, however, are happily averted. There are some intense situations, and the extraordinary interest of the tale is maintained throughout. It is of course a love story.

THE GOOSE GIRL By Harold MacGrath

Mr. MacGrath's story is concluded in this number after making one of the most successful serials ever published in AINSLEE'S. Mr. MacGrath's great gift of story telling has never appeared to greater advantage than in ***"The Goose Girl,"*** and nobody ought to miss these concluding chapters.

TEN SHORT STORIES

will be specially featured in the July number. **CLARA E. LAUGHLIN** will have one called ***"The Gospel,"*** which will give further experiences of Beth Tully, the heroine of ***"The Law,"*** in the June number. **MARY R. S. ANDREWS** will have an outdoor story called ***"The Sabine Maiden."*** **ANGELA MORGAN, CATHARINE THAYER, STEEL WILLIAMS, JOHNSON MORTON, QUENTIN M. DRAKE, FLORIDA PIER,** and **GEORGE LEE BURTON** will be the other contributors.

The essays will include another of **ARTHUR LORING BRUCE'S** popular series, ***"Around the Bridge Table,"*** and an article on ***"Story-Telling Music"*** by **RUPERT HUGHES.**

PRICE, 15c. PER COPY. ON SALE EVERYWHERE

AINSLEE MAGAZINE COMPANY, NEW YORK CITY



Temagami
Northern Ontario, Canada

—a new territory now reached by rail—the country of the canoe, the camper's paradise.

Fish for black bass, speckled trout and lake trout—the gamiest fish that swim. Shoot moose, deer, bear, partridge and other game during the hunting season.

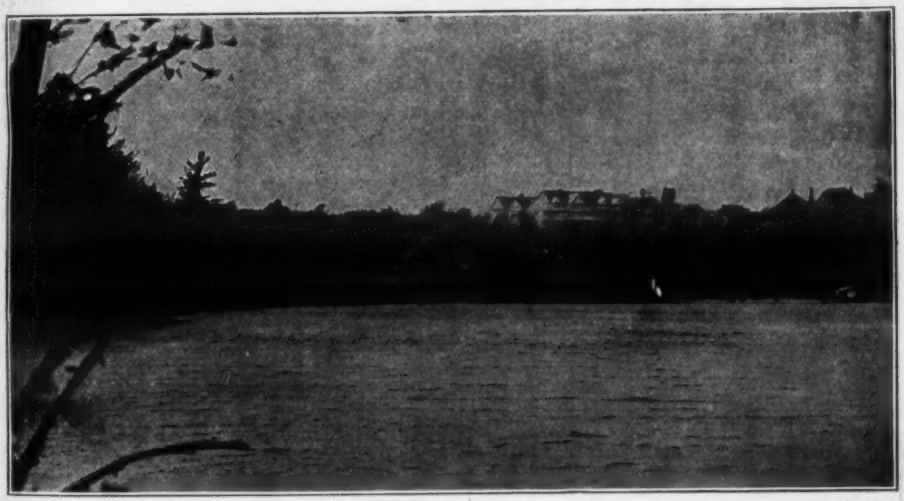
Bring your camera—the scenery is wild and magnificent.

In this pure, pine-perfumed air, hay fever is unknown.

A booklet telling you all about it, handsomely illustrated, sent on application to

G. W. Vaux, 917 Merc. Loan & Trust Co., Chicago
F. P. Dwyer, 290 Broadway, New York
E. H. Boynton, 360 Washington St., Boston
W. Robinson, 506 Park Building, Pittsburg

G. T. BELL, G. P. & T. A.
Montreal
W. E. DAVIS, P. T. M.
Montreal

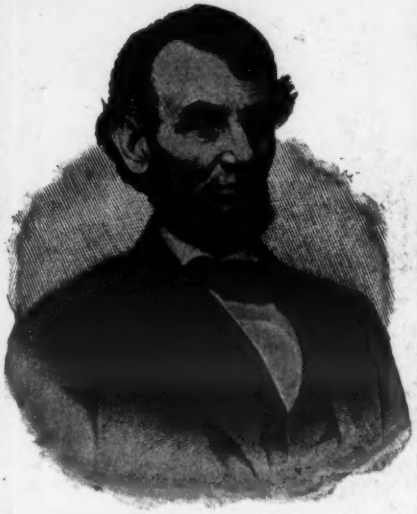


GRANLIDEN HOTEL, Lake Sunapee, N. H.

At the Gateway of the White Mountains. One of the finest Hotels in this Country. Good Fishing, Golf, Tennis, Boating, etc. Six Cottages to rent for the season. Write for circular. W. W. Brown, Dewey Hotel, Washington, D. C., until May 22nd, then Manhattan Hotel, New York City, until June first, after that Granliden Hotel, Lake Sunapee, N. H.

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

A Book Wanted by Every American



THE LINCOLN STORY BOOK

The greatest collection of stories and yarns about and by Abraham Lincoln ever published together in one book—stories that are tragic and comic—told in the inimitable manner so identified with the man. In this book are to be found stories of Lincoln's early life and career, his struggles for recognition and his ultimate triumph. These are all authoritative and throw a flood of light upon Lincoln's character as a man and as a statesman.

Art Cloth, 12mo. Price $1.50

STREET & SMITH, PUBLISHERS
NEW YORK



As it will appear when new addition is completed.

Hotel Martinique

Broadway and 33d Street
New York

"A Hotel in the Heart of Things"

Pre-eminent among New York Hotels for the excellence of its Cuisine, Service, and Appointment. Highest standard of accommodations at moderate rates.

CHAS. LEIGH TAYLOR, Pres.
WALTER S. GILSON, V.-Pres.
P. L. PINKERTON, Manager

Also proprietors St. Denis Hotel, N. Y.

Ainslee's Readers

who desire books at the lowest possible prices (from the manufacturer) should write to The Werner Company, Akron, Ohio, for Catalogue No. 9 G for they manufacture and sell more books (direct from the Factory to the Buyer) than any concern in the United States.

Catalogue No. 9 G covers the fields of Educational Works (Dictionaries and Encyclopedias), Histories, Philosophy, Science, Fiction, Romances, Standard Authors (Dickens, Scott, Thackeray, Poe, etc.), Religious and Art Works, Oratory, French and English Classics, Natural History, Cook Books, etc. Catalogue No. 9 G demonstrates the big savings made by buying of the manufacturer.

$3.000 TO $10.000 A YEAR
IN THE REAL ESTATE BUSINESS



We teach you by mail every branch of the Real Estate, General Brokerage, and Insurance Business, and appoint you SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE of the oldest and largest co-operative real estate and brokerage company in America. Representatives are making $3,000 to $10,000 a year without any investment of capital. Excellent opportunities open to YOU. By our system you can begin making money in a few weeks without interfering with your present occupation. Our co-operative department will give you more choice, salable property to handle than any other institution in the world. A Thorough Commercial Law Course FREE to Each Representative. Write for 62-page book, free.

THE CROSS COMPANY, 2723 Reaper Block, Chicago

WHY NOT BE AN ARTIST?



Our graduates are filling High Salaried Positions. Good artists

EARN $25 TO $100 PER WEEK

and upwards, in easy fascinating work. Our courses of Personal Home Instruction by correspondence, are complete, practical. Eleven years' successful teaching. Expert instructors. Positions guaranteed competent workers. Write for Handsome Art Book, Free.

SCHOOL OF APPLIED ART (Founded 1898.)
N 36 Gallery Fine Arts, Battle Creek, Mich.

TYPEWRITER



WE save you more than 50% on all typewriters. Typewriters from $10.00 up.

Write for Catalogue.

AMERICAN TYPEWRITER & SUPPLY CO.
174 to 188 Dearborn St., CHICAGO

I Teach Sign Painting



Show Card Writing or Lettering

by mail and guarantee success. Only field not overcrowded. My instruction is unequaled because practical, personal and thorough. Easy terms. Write for large catalogue.

CHAS. J. STRONG, Pres.,
Detroit School of Lettering
Dept. 21, Detroit, Mich.
"Oldest and Largest School of Its Kind"

STUDY LAW

Leading Law School in Correspondence Instruction. Established 1892

Prepares for the bar. Three Courses: College, Post-Graduate and Business Law. Method of instruction combines theory and practice. Approved by the bench and bar.

Classes begin each month. Send for catalog giving rules for admission to the bar of the several states.

Chicago Correspondence School of Law
536 Reaper Block, Chicago

SHORTHAND IN 30 DAYS

We absolutely guarantee to teach shorthand complete in only thirty days. You can learn in spare time in your own home, no matter where you live. No need to spend months as with old systems. Boyd's Syllabic System is easy to learn—easy to write—easy to read. Simple. Practical. Speedy. Sure. No ruled lines—no positions—no shading as in other systems. No long lists of word signs to confuse. Only nine characters to learn and you have the entire English language at your absolute command.

The best system for stenographers, private secretaries, newspaper reporters and railroad men. Lawyers, ministers, teachers, physicians, literary folk and business men and women may now learn shorthand for their own use. Does not take continual daily pratice as with other systems. Our graduates hold high grade positions everywhere. Send to-day for booklets, testimonials, etc.

CHICAGO CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS,
975 Chicago Opera House Block, Chicago, Ill.



LEARN TO WRITE ADVERTISEMENTS

Earn $25 to $100 a Week.

We will teach you by correspondence the most fascinating and profitable profession in the world. Send for our beautiful prospectus. It's Free.

PAGE-DAVIS SCHOOL
Address either office: Dept. 610, 90 Wabash Ave., Chicago / Dept. 610, 150 Nassau St., New York

BE AN ILLUSTRATOR—Learn to Draw. We will teach you by mail how to draw for magazines and newspapers. Send for catalog.

SCHOOL OF ILLUSTRATION, Office 10, 4007 Michigan B'lvd. CHICAGO



YOU CAN WRITE A SHORT STORY. Beginners learn so thoroughly under our perfect method of training that many are able to sell their stories before they complete the course. We also help those who want a market for their stories. Write for particulars. SCHOOL OF SHORT STORY-WRITING, Dept. 10, 4005 Mich. Ave., Chicago.

WANTED

Traveling Salesmen

YOU Can Be One Over 500,000 are now employed in the United States and Canada, and thousands of new ones start every year. Good Traveling Salesmen earn all the way from $1,000 to

$10,000 A YEAR

and expenses. We will teach you to be an expert by mail in eight weeks.

Our Free Employment Bureau

the largest of its kind in the world—will assist you to secure a position with a reliable firm. We received calls for Salesmen from over 3,000 firms last year and placed hundreds of our graduates in good positions. Scores of them who had no former experience and who formerly earned from $25 to $75 a month have since earned from $100 to $500 a month and expenses. If you want to qualify for a good position on the road and enter the most independent, well paid and most pleasant profession in the world where you can increase your earnings from two to ten times, write (or call) our nearest office today for our free book, "*A Knight of The Grip*," which will show you how. Address

Dept. 116 National Salesman's Training Association,
New York, Chicago, Kansas City, Minneapolis, San Francisco.

The Prudential

A Great Life Insurance Company

Assets, - - - 174 Million Dollars
Liabilities, - - 155 Million Dollars

Insurance in Force, 1 Billion 400 Million Dollars on 7½ Million Policies.

Total Payments to Policy Holders
Plus Amount Held at Interest to their Credit
313 Million Dollars

Total Number of Claims Paid, 1,180,000



Life Insurance in The Prudential is issued at Low Cost. Send us your Age and we will tell you just what it costs. Address Dept. 90

The Prudential
Insurance Company of America
Incorporated as a Stock Company by the State of New Jersey
JOHN F. DRYDEN, President
Home Office, Newark, New Jersey

AINSLEE'S
THE MAGAZINE THAT ENTERTAINS

VOL. XXIII — CONTENTS — No. 5

FOR · JUNE · 1909

Cover Design	*Ch. Weber-Ditzler*	
Frontispiece	*Howard Chandler Christy*	
A Man Called Collings. Complete Novel	*Marie Van Vorst*	1
The Wanderers. Short Story	*Mrs. Jacques Futrelle*	34
Forgiveness. Poem	*Lee Fairchild*	44
The Law. Short Story	*Clara E. Laughlin*	45
The Doer of Dreams. Short Story	*Charles Neville Buck*	56
East and West. Poem	*Torrance Benjamin*	65
Every Man His Own Symphonist. Essay	*Rupert Hughes*	66
The Goose Girl. Serial	*Harold MacGrath*	71
Mrs. Vincenne's Pearl Necklace. Short Story	*Norval Richardson*	93
Rondel. Poem	*Theodosia Garrison*	104
A Bad Lands Doctress. Short Story	*Steel Williams*	105
The Warmth of the Valley. Short Story	*Quentin M. Drake*	114
The Dull Little Man. Short Story	*Will Levington Comfort*	127
Around the Bridge Table. Essay	*Arthur Loring Bruce*	132
An Old Passion. Short Story	*Francis Willing Wharton*	137
Moon Song. Poem	*Angela Morgan*	144
Cupid's Impromptu. Short Story	*George Lee Burton*	145
The Beggar Minstrel. Poem	*Arthur Wallace Peach*	153
The Drum. Short Story	*Owen Oliver*	154
The Ship's Mascot. Short Story	*Roy Norton*	159
Plays and Players	*A First Nighter*	167
Privilege and Price. Poem	*Mary Wheeler*	171
For Book Lovers	*Archibald Lowery Sessions*	172
The Hamlet by the Sea. Poem	*William Struthers*	176

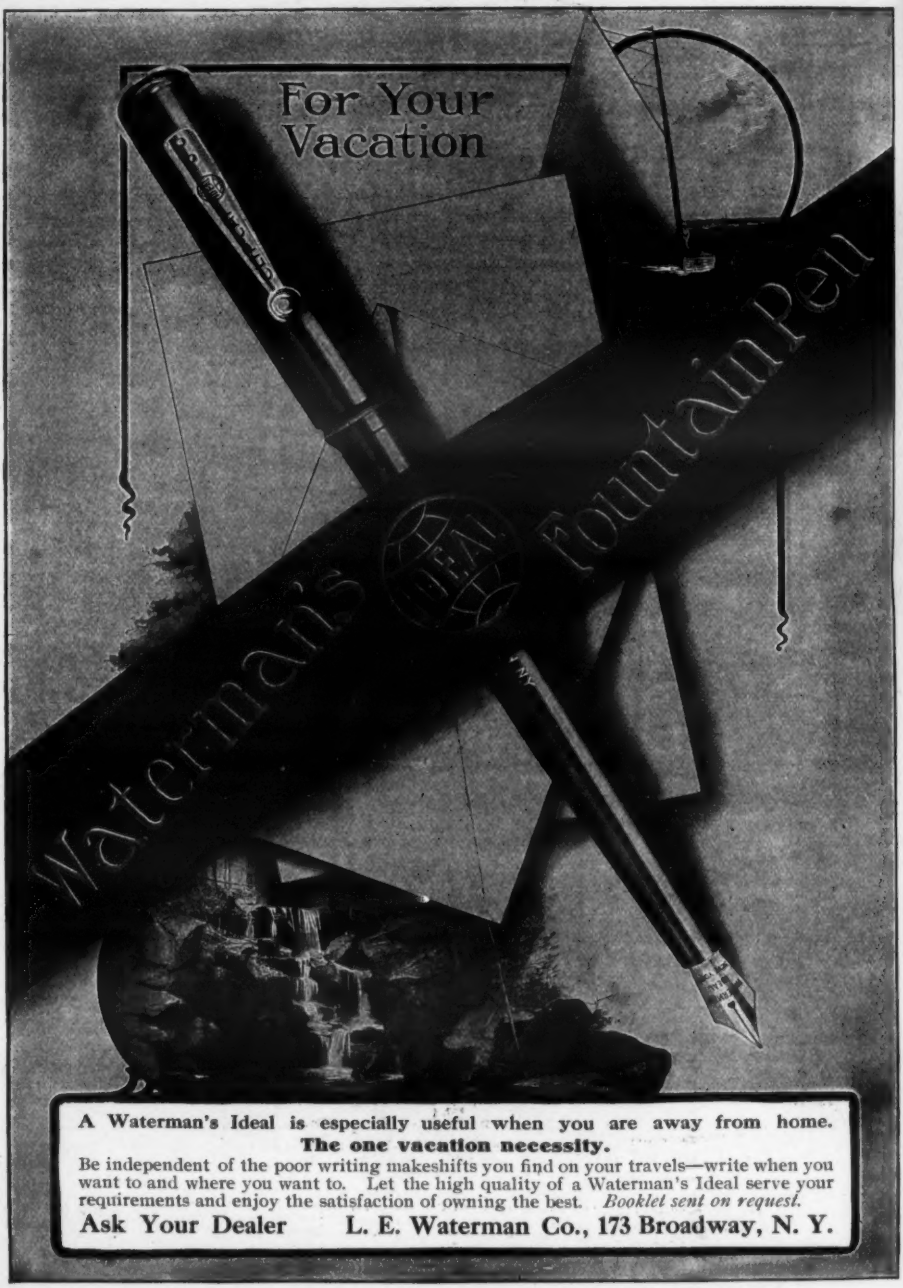
YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION $1.80 — SINGLE COPIES FIFTEEN CENTS

Monthly Publication issued by AINSLEE MAGAZINE CO., Seventh Avenue and Fifteenth Street, New York.
Ormond G. Smith, President; George C. Smith, Secretary and Treasurer, 79-89 Seventh Avenue, New York City.

Copyright, 1909, by Ainslee Magazine Co., New York. Copyright, 1909, by Ainslee Magazine Co., Great Britain. *All rights reserved.*
Publishers everywhere are cautioned against using any of the contents of this Magazine either wholly or in part.

Entered September 11, 1902, at New York as Second-class Matter, under Act of Congress of March 2, 1879.

WARNING Do not subscribe through agents unknown to you. Complaints are daily made by persons who have been thus victimized.



A Waterman's Ideal is especially useful when you are away from home.
The one vacation necessity.
Be independent of the poor writing makeshifts you find on your travels—write when you want to and where you want to. Let the high quality of a Waterman's Ideal serve your requirements and enjoy the satisfaction of owning the best. *Booklet sent on request.*
Ask Your Dealer **L. E. Waterman Co., 173 Broadway, N. Y.**

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



"BEFORE HE COULD RECOVER THE SWORD THE VICTOR
HAD PUT HIS FOOT UPON IT."

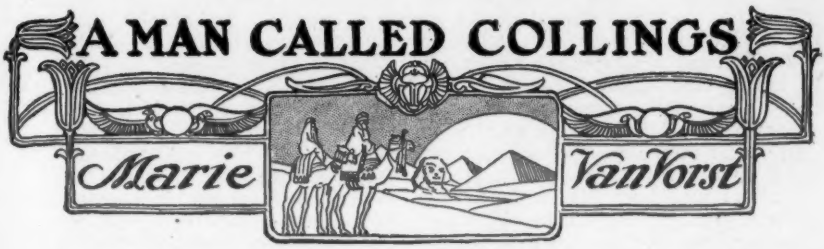
Painting by Howard Chandler Christy.

The Goose Girl, page 72.

AINSLEE'S

VOL. XXIII. JUNE, 1909. No. 5

A MAN CALLED COLLINGS



CHAPTER I.

THE universe looked black to little Robert Shannon as he stood in the corner of the cricket-field, his hands in the empty pockets of his trousers, his face drawn with anxiety. There was nothing more serious, however, in his condition than was bred by the fact that he was outrageously in debt for a small boy who had no means to pay what he owed. Bright-headed, vigorous in spite of his few years of life, blue-eyed, the ordinary type of English schoolboy, young Robert Shannon looked astonishingly as he would look when he grew to be a man. He thought nothing of these things, all he knew was that if by hook or crook he couldn't scrape together enough to clear the debt of the sweet-shop, to clear the little debts of honor among his chums, he was in a bad way. There was no more money coming to him from home. Very little ever came to him, and he had been generous and reckless and foolish all at once.

His aunt had sent him a pound on his birthday in a moment of singular family affection, and Bob had felt himself to be a millionaire for the time and had spent accordingly. Too suddenly rich he had been too extravagantly generous and found himself as suddenly a pauper. His wretched little debts about his miserable little blond head!

Robert Shannon was the younger son of Lord John Shannon of Baccleagh, Cork, with eight brothers ahead of him, and could never inherit the title. But he was a Shannon from the County of Cork, a gentleman and proud as a prince. He minded horribly to be in debt; minded with all his honest little soul the fact that he couldn't pay up his creditors. No man in maturer life could suffer more in proportion than did the small cricketer, who had dropped out of games and sports for the past few days, skulked around the green, been cross as a young bear and perfectly wretched seeing no way out of his dilemma.

Bob Shannon stared gloomily at the scene before him where the mystic beauty of an English November lay over the school-grounds, touching the reddish brick of the school-buildings, while, like soft flags, a delicate mist floated over the eaves. There was a delicious crisp in the air that smacked of winter. Bob's breath made a little frosty fog before him as he breathed out hard on the air; far down the green he could hear the calls and cries of the boys—of the

chaps with whom he had no heart to associate.

He walked along leisurely toward the school-buildings, his bright head bent, serious and troubled. The shopman who had sold him an alarming quantity of tarts and treacle, popcorn, barley sugar, and chestnuts, had threatened this day to send his bill in to the head master. It was an unheard-of threat for the good old shopman to make. He hadn't meant it, but honest Bob Shannon, who couldn't remember to having lied in his life—not a real lie—had no way of knowing that the shopman wouldn't keep his word.

He went into the schoolroom, to see there on the window-seat, kicking his heels and whistling, his hands in his pockets, a chap called Collings.

"I say," the boy greeted Bob, "want some toffy?"

He held out a stick to his chum. Shannon's spirits were not so low but that the sight of the delectable brown candy raised them a trifle. He took the offered sweet and filled it in his cheek and stood moodily before his chum. It was a crucial moment in the lives of both these young chaps; neither of them could know it, although Bob Shannon's feelings were excessive enough for a small boy.

"I say," Collings continued, "that was a rippin' treat you gave us, Shannon." His remark was particularly cruel.

The boy on the window-seat was about the age of the son of Lord John Shannon, of Baccleagh. Philip Collings was not a nobleman's son. His family were in the army, and he, himself, destined for the same career. The boy was thin and graceful, less robust and stalwart than his Irish friend, with something of an effeminate beauty of brow, and the contour of his face was fine and delicate. As he sat in the window-seat kicking his legs, back of him in the west the November sun dropped down. It left a red glow. The red glow came in and shone down upon the little schoolboy until he seemed to sit with his back to glory. Bob Shannon stood sucking his candy in the shade.

"Rotten!" mumbled the Irish boy. "I call treats rotten!" He stopped his words short, ashamed to seem to regret a generosity that was causing him so dear.

Phil Collings was a new boy, he had come from another school, and was making his way at Broad Stairs Manor less slowly; he had admired Bob Shannon all through that term. Shannon was a great favorite, and his befriending of the new boy had been quite a help to Philip.

"I say, Collings, sit down out of that sunlight," Shannon asked, and Phil obediently slipped off the window-seat and stood by Bob in the shade.

"What's the row, Shannon?"

There isn't much sentimentality between boys of twelve years of age. They are rude, brutish little animals, as a rule, who studiously crush out everything that looks like sentiment. The English schoolboy would rather be flayed alive than display anything that goes for a feeling; still there are times —— Philip Collings' voice had a friendly ring. He had a quick, sensitive, comprehensive intuition—intuition such as women have.

"What's the row?" he repeated, and familiarly put his hand on his chum's shoulder. "Come on," he offered, "I have got a corner in the hollow by the stream where I have dammed up some frogs. Let's go over and see how they are comin' along. We've just time before tea."

Bob turned with him, as willing to go and see a lot of imprisoned frogs as anything else, and at the same second, across the path of the sun's brightness, growing fainter every moment, stalked a figure which struck momentary panic to the boy's heart. It was the figure of Beach, the man who owned the sweet-shop. Beach was going toward the head master's house. Standing on the threshold of the school, the debtor for tarts turned pale as death. He had no means of knowing that the sweet-shopman had commissions other than hunting up his tardy young patrons. To the boy's thinking, he was making straight for justice, and

in the next half-hour Shannon saw himself disgraced. If his father knew that he had run up debts which he had no means of paying, if the boys from whom he had borrowed knew that the chief creditor had come down upon him, there would be no help for Bob Shannon.

Philip, his mind on the frogs, walked in front of his friend, who dragged heavy feet after him in silent misery.

Just as they crossed the end of the green, Collings turned and said, with the inevitable prefix: "Oh, *I* say, think I'll give a treat myself next half-holiday. Those plum-tarts were perfectly rippin'." Then he saw his comrade's face, and the silent distress upon it touched the finer fibres of the boy.

"Look here," he insisted, stopping short, "what is the row, anyway, Shannon? Can I do anything?"

"Beach," said Shannon desperately, "did you see him? Well, he has gone up to the head master to peach on me."

"What for?"

"I owe him a pound and more." As Bob began to confess, something like a sob came up to his lips. "That's all. I expect I must owe as much as two pounds altogether. I've been going it rather fast this half-term."

Collings' face did not change its expression. "That's nothing!" he assured cheerfully, "I had a birthday last week and dad sent me five pounds. I haven't touched any of it yet, because I was saving up to get a boat, but I don't care about the old boat, Shannon. You can have all you want."

As he made his offer Collings felt himself to be a millionaire. No money he ever had possessed and none he could ever possess until the end, would give him the joy that those five pounds did that November afternoon at school. He had a great admiration for the Irish boy. There was something in Bob Shannon that he loved.

Shannon didn't answer, and Phil said brightly: "Come on, let's see the frogs," and started toward the pool, the Irish boy hard behind him.

Shannon's step had changed. It had altered. His heart's tension relaxed. It was a new debt, of course, this borrowing of Philip, but it was a different kind of debt. "I say—stop," he said, as he got to the edge of the copse. "Hold up a minute. You wait here, I want to grab Beach before he gets in to the master." He turned and ran back.

Philip watched him as his short, strong little figure dashed like mad across the turf.

Back in the shadow, the lights were being lit in the boys' study-rooms. A bell, clear and soft, rang the summons to tea. It was too late to look after Collings' imprisoned pets. Whistling, he slowly retraced his steps toward the school-building, his head lifted and his heart glad with the knowledge that he could help Bob through. He had no money in his pockets just then. The master was keeping it for him, but he could call on it, right enough; and conferring that day a service whose value and whose quality should light him to the last of his mortal days, Phil Collings went happily in to his tea.

CHAPTER II.

If Khartoum runs up its heat to one hundred and twenty-three Fahrenheit in the month of January, Heaven knows where the mercury climbs in April.

The officer in a certain regiment quartered up in those hellish degrees of heat—Captain Philip Collings—standing on the terrace of the Grand Hotel, thought of the coolness of England, of the coolness of almost any blessed equable climate, and cursed Sudan, cursed his fate in more senses than one. He had spent a month up here now alone—that is, if a man can be said to be alone when he has for company seven devils!

Collings didn't count the demons; he didn't number them, but he knew them particularly well. There were two at the present time who were keeping him close company, and there are no things that go more perfectly well together than Despair and Temptation.

Philip Collings, standing on the terrace of the Grand Hotel, looked out

over a blazing scene. Below him between two high walls ran the heavenly waters of the Blue Nile. The Blue Nile ran between shores formed on one side by the chocolate-brown borders of Omderman and a high white wall built up by an energetic English engineer. Before Collings ran an avenue bordered by mimosa and tamarisk-trees. The poor things looked dried reeds in the heat.

Just in front of the hotel, close to the Nile's shores, stood a silent *sakieh*. The water-wheel could not turn in this deadly heat, for the little native boy who should run around it and the slow oxen who turned the wheel would both have dropped dead in the internal roasting caldron that Khartoum was at this hour.

The terrace of the Grand Hotel was deserted save for a handful of natives, who, half-clothed, seated under the shadow of the veranda, conversed in their startlingly excited tones. Collings sat down at a small table, called to the waiter to bring him a lemon-quash, and lit his cigarette.

He was a slender chap, well put up, but with shoulders that slightly drooped under his white duck coat. He was not in uniform; he wore white riding-trousers, russet boots, and a white helmet.

Under it his bronzed face looked thin and small. Collings' eyes were the best part of it, brown and clear, with something in them of appeal, something that suggested that they might be faithful eyes if once given what is known as a "dog's chance." Ever since he had gone into the army he had been down on his luck, so he said to himself, and yet, perhaps, it wasn't the date of his entering into the army that was the important point; Collings would rather have put it, ever since the day that he had met her.

Turning his glass of iced liquid around between his slender brown fingers, he meditated moodily, rather sunk in his chair, huddled more or less, and his face under his heavy helmet grew smaller. Away back in his days in college he had lost his heart to a beautiful girl, and the charming woman had given him every reason to suppose that his courtship of her would not be lost. He had been later so singularly prosperous as to find himself engaged to be married to the beauty of the year. Sitting as he did, huddled up in his chair on the terrace of the Grand Hotel, something like eight thousand miles from Ireland, there was a cool delicious refreshment in thinking of her as he had seen her in a pretty frock, sweet and desirable as he had last seen her standing—one hand on the old stone wall, one hand outstretched to him when she had bidden him good-by.

Everybody told him that she was an outrageous coquette, but she had said that she loved him. She had many men at her heels, so he put it; but he had been so blind as to think that, poor as he was, with his future before him, this woman was willing to throw in her lot with him. Everything subsequent had proved to him how great a fool he had been made; how insincere a woman's vows can be.

Collings drained his cool drink until the bottom of the glass was dry; he puffed his cigarette, then threw it away. Why on this particular afternoon such a poignant memory of the woman he loved should have come back to him he couldn't tell. Of course, underneath everything he did was the memory of her; but lately, things up here, things in Cairo, things before he came here, in Paris, and elsewhere, had helped him pretty well to press her memory back, to draw across her face when it threatened to make him weak a veil which he, by his own indulgences, had dyed black enough.

He might have been anywhere but in Khartoum on this hot afternoon. There was no reason for him to hang about; no reason but one he had made for himself. He sent for the papers, read over the news already a fortnight old, turned indolently the leaves of a novel which had long ceased to interest the public, and then arose and swung himself, without regard to the heat, into the blinding road.

The house, or, rather, the palace, of Ranelagh Pasha, was one of the first

palaces to be built in Khartoum. It stands back from the highroad some two hundred feet. It is walled about by a stucco fencing, and stands back with a bit of lawn around it—a bit of green coaxed into existence with the greatest care. Ranelagh Pasha lived there with his wife, a beautiful creature, his junior by some ten years, one of the few white women on the upper Nile, lonely, blue, and more or less bored by existence.

On this afternoon, the lady sat by a small table in her cool drawing-room, lightly enough dressed, with a glass of iced lemon-quash at her side and newspapers and novels a fortnight old and more from the countries that seemed so far away. Her surroundings were more or less like those of Philip Collings on the Grand terrace porch, and her point of view was not unlike his own. Back of her, indeed, she had no such withering disappointment, but she was bored, and that condition is a dangerous one for any beautiful woman. When the Sudanese servant came in, in his gleaming white robe and his red leather shoes, and announced Effendi Collings, a smile of pleasure crossed her face, and she arose, the folds of her dress falling around her pretty figure, and came forward to him with both her hands held out.

Collings threw himself down on a divan near her; let her order something more for him to drink; drew the box of cigarettes toward him, lit one, and, leaning back, his dark head against the pillows of the divan, he looked at her with appreciation.

"It is as hot as inferno," he said. "There is nothing in the world to-day, is there, Mrs. Ranelagh? So, of course, I came to you to tell you the truth. If I hadn't come up here this afternoon, I think I should have blown out my brains."

"Oh, dear," she answered, "how perfectly horrible, and how clever of you to prefer this."

She leaned forward as she spoke, and Collings, looking at her, the color rising under his tan, said, under his breath: "Oh, I don't know, after all, whether it was such a clever choice. It might have been better——"

But her gaze still on him she said: "Nonsense, how ridiculous you are! I am alone here, and so are you. We are two deserted creatures in a God-forsaken country, why shouldn't we——"

"Make it very miserable?" Collings asked.

"Make it very happy," Mrs. Ranelagh said, with a smile.

He shrugged his shoulders under his linen jacket. "Women don't make men happy, Mrs. Ranelagh. I don't think they have any wish to. To tell the truth, I think the lot of you are set on just one thing."

Collings' hostess, rather surprised at his serious tone, watched him.

"Set on just one thing—taking a man's soul down to hell!"

She gave an exclamation, and put out her hand. "Really, if you have come here to say such things as that——"

"It would have been better if I had stayed down at the Grand and blown out my brains at the end of the day."

"I don't know what has put you in such a frightful mood," his hostess said. "People whom I ask up here for tea don't, as a rule, come in like damned spirits and make me blue with their wailings." She bit her lips and smiled slightly at him. "I don't think I deserve it, Captain Collings, after all. I assure you my husband would not agree with you that I have drawn his soul so low as you say. I think your experiences must have been horribly unfortunate."

"They have," he interrupted gloomily. "Very."

For a moment neither of them spoke. The woman watched him curiously. He was very good-looking indeed, and at present with the expression of misery on his face, there was something appealing and rather touching about him. After a few seconds, she said: "Did you run across Mr. Shannon at all?" and Collings' face slightly cleared.

"Poor old Bob," affectionately, "what a wonder he is!" His expression lifted. "Now, there," he said, with honest ad-

miration, "is the kind of a chap that things like I speak of don't strike."

"No?" Mrs. Ranelagh answered. "You mean that he is immune?"

"I mean," said Collings, "that he is perfectly ripping, for he goes along in a way—he lives his life in a fashion—he carries the whole thing through just as I would give my life to be able to do." He seemed to be thinking away from her as he spoke. "I mean to say," he continued on, then drew himself up short, lifted, and turned a more natural face to his hostess.

"What a boor you must find me, Mrs. Ranelagh," he exclaimed naturally. "Please forget all I have gone on about, and—aren't you going to have a cigarette yourself?"

Mrs. Ranelagh took one from the box and lit it at Collings' cigarette. As she withdrew she held it between her fingers and said softly: "I don't want to force your confidence, Captain Collings, but I do wish you would tell me what has made you so down on your luck."

The man shook his head. "I am not going to tell you anything more gloomy, dear lady. I'm no end of a boor to bring such a thing in here. It is all over, anyway." He made a graceful gesture. "You see, you have made me forget already."

As he paused, Mrs. Ranelagh said more to herself than to him: "I wish I could."

Collings, looking at her, caught her words and asked eagerly: "You *do*, you *do*, really?"

Mrs. Ranelagh did not immediately answer. Sitting back in her comfortable chair, pillows behind her, and a footstool at her pretty feet, she made a picture of a most agreeable consolatrice. Her hair was soft about her brows, her features pretty and mobile. Collings looked at her, impressed her upon his mind, took her in with one admiring glance, and then without speaking to her, looked at her steadily, and after a few seconds she lifted her eyes.

Without, the sun had gone down across the shore in the west. The terrible heat had dropped somewhat, but the sky was red as fire and the windows behind Collings were all flushed with glory. He did not remain, however, seated with his back to that transcendent radiance. He got up from his seat and came around to Mrs. Ranelagh's side; his hands in the pockets of his white duck trousers, he stood meditatively looking down at her. Somehow, just then there came into his mind the thought of Ranelagh Pasha. The man had done much for him in Egypt. He owed him a great deal. Contracting his brows, he pushed the memory away.

He pulled a chair up and sat down close to the woman's side. Neither of them spoke for a few moments, and then Collings bent over and lifted one of her hands. He looked at it for a few moments, holding it gently. For a long time every woman's hand had given him a pang, but there was nothing in this hand and pretty wrist to recall any memory. He kissed Mrs. Ranelagh's fingers and then he said, bending close to her:

"I mean just what I say, it seems to me you all want to drag us down, but if you mean that you really think you can make me forget the rest——"

She did not reply at once. Her face was fixed and her eyes set straight before her. Collings let her hand fall.

"If you think," he almost faltered, "that you are *human* enough, *kind* enough to take pity on me—if you could lift for just a little while some of this horror——" He didn't finish. Again he said: "What a boor I am—what an awkward fool—what a way to speak to a woman!"

He would have sprung up, but she retained him by a touch and looked at him with something of real kindness on her face.

"You really are in a dreadful way, Captain Collings," simply, "you really ought to pull yourself together."

Now Collings seized her hand between both his. "There's nothing to pull together very much," he said. "To tell you the truth, I have gone all to bits. Down there at the Grand, I give you my word, I believe I had come to

my last hour. It is not so much one thing," he went on, "that has seemed to damn me, it is the whole run of my life, and I cannot alter it—not unless some woman helps me." He found himself stammering.

His words were so sincere and so extraordinary from a standing Anglo-Saxon soldier that Mrs. Ranelagh looked at him in amazement. And this time she showed her face more clearly, and it was gentle and human and had a woman's comprehension in it. He seized her other hand and drew them both to his breast and said:

"It's a beastly poor way to make love to a woman, isn't it? Not much of a way to tell you that I love you, is it—is it?" He gave something like a gasp and bowed his head over her hands. "But you said," he repeated with almost a boyish simplicity, "that you wished you could make me forget." Here he lifted his eyes and met hers. "If you can, if you can, I wish to God you would try."

Here without, there came the sound of the bugle blowing the retreat and Collings, straightening up, brushed his hand across his head and eyes, took up his hat and made an effective leave possibly, for he did not bid his hostess good-by. She, herself, knelt on the window-seat when he had gone and looked after him. He almost ran from the garden into the road. She saw him join one or two brother officers as they passed, and watched him disappear down the road.

To the right now, one hundred feet away, the memorial chapel built for Gordon lifted its small tower into the night sky. All the red of the sunset by this time had been wiped out—blotted out—and over Khartoum and through the Nile the sky stretched as limpid and as pale as a mist. The new moon hung its silver thread above Gordon's rose-tree, and circling high in the pallid air a flock of vultures spread their black wings dark against the moon. There was an evening service. Mrs. Ranelagh had heard the bells ringing when Collings first came in, and now she could hear the sound of the organ playing Gordon's favorite hymn. The boys were walking out of the chorus-stalls and their voices came very faintly through the open windows:

"Abide with me! Fast falls the evening tide."

Ranelagh Pasha had been a chum of General Gordon and he had often told his wife how his commander loved that special tune. The little woman in the window of her Nile palace did not reflect on the memories of Gordon or on England's tribute to him; she strained her eyes down the road to see the white speck that in the distance was Captain Philip Collings going home.

CHAPTER III.

It was toward ten o'clock that night when Collings was again conscious of the workings of his own mind. He found himself this time sitting just within the long window which gave on the terrace of the hotel, leaning on his elbow, his head sunk in his hand. The room was dark. The guests were few and Collings had the place to himself, as he thought he had too many places to himself; too great a solitude in which to confront his soul with his deeds and misdeeds. His mind was in a daze from the effects of the drug which he had taken not eight hours before, and he could scarcely collect his senses together sufficiently to realize the things he wanted to go over in his mind.

The waiter had placed a glass of iced whisky at his hand. At this time of night he allowed himself to begin to drink when there was nothing else to do. The hand he extended toward his glass trembled. He took a long swallow of the liquor, heaved a sigh, wiped the perspiration from his forehead, and made himself as comfortable as he could in his wicker chair.

The window, opened before him, framed the blatant beauty of a night of full moon in the Sudan. The moonlight seemed to come in upon him like a perfumed garment, for the odors of the night were heavy and delicious, and the smell of the oleander and jas-

mine, carried by a fresh wind from the window, blended with the rose-like odors of the sand. In his mood—intense and screwed up as it was—the very perfume was like a pain to Collings. Now and then across the window passed the shadow of some one of the hotel guests stirring in this heavenly cool of the night.

The Englishman, after a few moments, gave up the task he had set himself of putting his disordered mind in order, and listened to the voices of two speakers just without the window. Collings knew one voice well. Robert Shannon was talking to a visitor, who had come to Khartoum that afternoon—a visitor of distinction, a Frenchman who had brought with him funds to invest in the new Nile lands; and there was a third man at the table—young Pendenning, a friend of Shannon's. Collings listened.

"This part of the country," the Irishman was saying slowly, "isn't much in the way of ease. I mean to say, it doesn't offer what you might call a bed of roses to a chap, perhaps, but I like it. I don't miss the things any more that I used to think it would be hard to go without. I give you my word that when one thousand miles from here, when my camels have swung the stream with all my kit on their backs, when I stand up there alone in Ringa, the desert before me, behind me, and on all sides, I have a feeling of life in me and power."

Here the young man's voice stopped and he laughed shortly. "Oh, I don't really mean to go on as though I could ever do much of anything. It only comes with a certain feeling of excitement to know that if anything at all during the next few months is going to be built up out of a sand-heap, why it is up to you to see it done."

Pendenning interrupted, addressing the Frenchman: "Shannon has built and engineered three cities—we call them cities up here, monsieur—forged his way in and, under all kinds of dangers and a lot of discomfort, actually ran up places of habitation in the wilderness."

The Frenchman murmured his appreciation.

"I think it is a bully sort of way to live in these days," the young Irishman went on, "to make up something out of nothing—to go on with colonizing; and, if you are not a soldier, to help the government in this fashion."

Here the Frenchman, speaking in his own language, put in his word. Nothing had interested him more, he said, than pioneering in the Sudan, but he had also been very much attracted by the picture of a certain raid made upon the encampment of a certain English gentleman not six months ago, when all his servants deserted him; when he found himself at the dead of one night alone in his tent, a handful of mutiny on his right and a band of cruel murderers on his left; and how that one man in his tent door had dominated all by his bravery and by a certain something which had stood up both barbarism, savagery, and butchery.

Collings could hear each move on the porch as Shannon pushed away from the table. The latter tried to turn the tide of the conversation, but Pendenning interrupted.

"Ripping of you to have heard of it, monsieur. That's all right, Bob. It was Shannon, did you not know? Well, I suppose you didn't. It is a pretty little story of this part of the country just at present, and nobody knows it but Shannon and me and Shannon's man-servant."

Shannon muttered that Mahomet had drawn largely on his imagination as usual, and that the thing had no importance whatever, but the Frenchman continued in his enthusiasm. And here the conversation became slightly more general and the question of heroism was approached, the question of personal devotion, and one by one the incidents multiplied.

To the man within the darkened room—to the individual smiling behind his hand with interest at what he heard, drinking his iced liquor in sips—the stories had peculiar significance. Philip Collings, as he listened, forgot his useless, vapid, troubled past.

Used as he was to a visionary point of view, keen as he was to all sentiment, instead of racking himself over the coals as he had planned to do, he began, sitting there, to muse on glory. Pendenning spoke of cleaning up the Sudan in an enthusiastic, high-handed way. The Frenchman advanced some keen suggestions for education and colonization. Robert Shannon spoke of cities and walls, and of the protection against the dervish uprisings, and Philip Collings thought of himself in it all as a future worker. He began to want to take some kind of part in the moment, as these three men turned it over in their talk.

Pendenning, after a little, got up, saying that he was done up with the heat and was going to bed. The Frenchman called his servant and went off with him to the palace where he was a guest, and Shannon lingered with his cigarette out in the moonlight, and Philip Collings lingered by his empty glass. Shannon was mentally drawing a little plan for an aqueduct; something he was always doing, for he had a great desire to hoard up the Nile waters at a point some five hundred miles up the stream.

The state of mind to which Collings had drawn himself up could not last long; a prey to indulgences, his nerves were racked and strained. He had no power of endurance whatsoever, and as the stimulus of the whisky began somewhat to abate, his spirits fell, and with cruel determination, reproach, and remorse, the whip of his conscience began to take him into the state of mind he had foreseen would follow.

He had reached the limit of his finances; he had overdrawn his pay; he was in a state of mental and physical collapse worse than he had ever known; and now he was confronted with the direct question which Mrs. Ranelagh made in his mind. He had never scrupled to do anything he liked, and the only reason that he scrupled at all now was because the image and memory of the woman he had loved in Ireland came back to him insistently at every turn of his thought. She had dogged him lately—kept him company lately—until down there in Cairo, he had run like a man pursued from the miserable place he had made for himself in the worst stews of the city. Up here she had held him back by memory. He couldn't down it, and he felt that as long as there was a chance in the world that he might see her again and might speak to her again, he would try for that chance and cut short up here.

All this he had felt with his might and main until this afternoon at Mrs. Ranelagh's side. The touch of her hand on his lips, the feeling of her hands as he pressed them against his breast—all this had been too much for his memory. She was making him forget; she could make him forget; he was going to let her do so. Until Robert Shannon's voice and the quiet decent plans for working in the new country, until the little story of Shannon's quiet glory, until the picture of him in his tent at night dominating the hordes had come to Collings' ears, there had been nothing strong enough to turn his point of view.

Robert Shannon pressed the last spark of his cigarette out in his saucer and looked up. Standing in the doorway, holding onto the sides of the jamb, stood the picture of a man in evening clothes.

"By Jove!" Shannon said. "Phil, I thought you were a ghost."

Collings came waveringly forward and got into the seat before his friend. He looked at Shannon without speaking. He was not himself. Before his eyes there waved like two flags his idea of his old life—his idea of new possibilities here; a faint dream of something that might be for him—glory. He looked at Shannon affectionately and half smiled. He felt a great need of this man which his reticence would never let him put in words; he wanted to speak with him; he wanted Shannon to tell him things, to talk to him.

Shannon's face was friendly, a little amused and very serene. He looked big and fair and stalwart, dignified and at peace. Collings saw him through a

haze. The intention of pouring forth some faltering confession of a misled life, of course, died in the soldier almost as soon as it was born. But his conviction as he grew a little less dazed became stronger and stronger that Shannon was what he needed. He poured himself, at last, a glass of water from an earthern bottle, drank it, and then clasping his hands to steady them he leaned across the table and said:

"I am going down the river to-morrow, Bob—when you get up I shall be gone."

"What's the row?" Shannon asked.

Collings drew a breath. "I have chucked up my commission. I fancy you knew that, however. It had to come." He lowered his voice. "There is just a little too much truth in all the things they got against me; and between you and me, old man, I thought I had rather get out before I was kicked."

He met Shannon's blue eyes steadfastly with his own bloodshot brown ones. His face was hard and white, his lips very red and dry. He nodded and smiled and the man opposite him, utterly unconscious of any need that Collings felt, said:

"Well, I dare say you'll pick up something or other in England."

He didn't mean to be either indifferent or unfriendly. He, too, was reticent. The wreck his friend was disgusted him, and he could have no possible means of knowing that he could do anything to stop the derelict in its drifting passage down into the current.

CHAPTER IV.

Some eighteen months later of a sultry afternoon the long shafts of the sun seemed to penetrate the Blue Nile and to shoot themselves down like fiery arrows into the water. The shores of Omdurman lay red as blood and over them, here and there, white-robed figures of natives were hurried down the market-places to the stream.

In Khartoum harbor the small river-boats were massed. Golden-brown craft with slender masts in the sunset like lily-stalks they took upon themselves an orange-gold; and crouching on the sand, the huge naked blacks chattered as they watched their moored ships. Khartoum itself had the air of a sleeping lion yellow under the rays of the sun, and back from the avenue—the avenue banked by Robert Shannon's high city wall—the palace of Ranelagh Pasha sent back from every window the ruddy reflection of the dying day. Away over beyond in the west there was a tremendous gathering of a violent storm-cloud. It hung some twelve miles over the distant hills, and its coming was not yet remarked.

In the drawing-room of the lady of the house the blinds were open; the room was cool, and Mrs. Ranelagh Pasha, sitting in the window-seat, her hands clasped in her lap, was bathed in the bright, bright glory. The man who was her companion sat this time before her in a lounging-chair, but his attitude was not one of indolence. He leaned toward her, his face tense and white.

"There seems," he said—and he had said it a dozen times in different forms—"nothing for us to do then, does there?"

She shrugged. "There seems for us just what there is for any two people in our position, the inevitable parting."

Collings bit his lip, clasped his knee with his two slender sensitive hands, and bent his eyes upon her.

"How extraordinary," he said, with something like a gasp, "how extraordinary to think that you can sit there so coolly and so calmly and send me about my business."

The eyes of his friend wandered over his dark head to the farther doorway. She was thinking that if by any mistake her telegram had not got her husband at Suakim he might—there was just a possibility that he might be coming into Khartoum on this tri-weekly train. She didn't think very much about it, however, as the chances were so against it.

She brought her eyes back to her companion. "You force me," she said,

shaking her feet nervously, "to continue to say fifty times the same thing, Phil. Why, in Heaven's name, can't you be as another man would be? Why can't you take it simply? Why can't you," she hurried on, "understand that we have risked everything already, had a tremendous amount already, and that as long as things stand as they do——"

Collings unclasped his knee and interrupted shortly: "Since you have entirely ceased to care for me——"

"Oh, care!" she exclaimed, still agitated. "Since I have grown to see reason, you would better put it. Why won't you just go away like a dear, and help me out of it and make things simple all around?"

A slight smile crossed the finely cut lips of the Englishman. His hand trembled like a woman's as he lifted it and ran his fingers through his dark hair. Then he got up from his chair, walked several times to and fro in the room—came back to her—stood before her—his hands in his pockets, and said:

"A year ago, Beatrice, right here you led me on." He put his hand out coolly to stop her interruption. "Oh, God knows I only note this as a fact, I couldn't reproach a woman to her face though I might curse her behind her back, and you know I don't curse you or reproach you. On the contrary, I suppose I ought to be grateful that I have had a month or two of something like happiness." He stopped, thought a second, and then went on more brutally. "I am not thankful though—I am not. Every bit of kindness given and withdrawn only makes the whole thing more damnably hard, and I have been pretty near to loving you. I mean to say, to loving you awfully, and now—and now——"

As he had come very close to her she thought it better to rise and be more on her guard. So Mrs. Ranelagh left the window-seat, climbed down from it, and stood placing the chair on which she leaned her arms between them.

"Phil," she said, "I told you not to come up here. I begged and implored you to leave me alone. When we parted in Paris I thought you understood."

He laughed. "Oh, no, you didn't," he said, with something like an ugly look in his eyes. "You fully expected me to follow you, and now I have done so, what are you going to do with me?"

"Hark!" she said finally, her dark head for a moment close to his. "What's that?"

He listened, too, and then said: "It is nothing but a racket up at the palace. The windows are open. It is the organ you hear. It is nothing."

He came forward to her, and tried to put his hands upon hers, but she withdrew them.

"Look here," he said, "Beatrice, be true to yourself. Are you going to tell me now face to face that you don't care a rap what becomes of me?"

"I told you, Philip," she repeated, "that you force me into any amount of cruelty."

"No, no," said Collings, shaking his head, "men don't force women to be cruel, they only help their nature to declare itself, but I won't let myself be a bounder." He spoke with difficulty. He had overstimulated before he came and he knew it. "I won't let myself say anything that I regret, Beatrice. I only want to repeat to you that I am ready to stand by all our past, that I want you to marry me, that Ranelagh will be sure to let you get a divorce——"

"Stop!" she said. "Stop! Don't say another word."

For a second the young man obeyed her. He folded his arms against his breast and looked at her with that peculiar intensity that to a woman who has ceased to care is irritating and annoying in the extreme.

As they stood so, through the windows came the sound of the organ in the palace chapel. There was a late service being held and the choir-practise had begun. The sweet and plaintive notes came faintly and purely from the stucco building near-by, and at the same time the light that fell across

the windows and garden withdrew slowly and the evening paled into the bright dusk of desert countries.

The two people standing silently in the middle of the room were enemies; enemies, after having been far, far too much to one another.

Seeing that the woman was not likely to break the silence, that she had nothing she wished to say to him, Collings was driven to a sort of desperation. Violently pushing the chair between them away, in spite of her protests, he took her hands, and bringing his face close to hers, he said:

"Then you refuse absolutely to have anything more to do with me?"

"Yes, yes, you know it, Philip. I have told you so a dozen times. I told you so in Paris. I want you to leave me alone."

"I know," he gasped, "I know, but it is hard to believe that. I wouldn't have any one in the world know how you have turned me down."

She pushed him away suddenly. "Hark!" she said again.

The man could not listen to her; he could hear nothing in the short silence between them but the organ's music and the slender voices of the distant choir.

"Abide with me! Fast falls the eventide,
The darkness deepens."

There was nothing in what he heard to turn his mind from the woman—nothing.

"Listen to me," he repeated to her. "You will not marry me; you will not take advantage of Ranelagh's suspicion or notice and let him divorce you; everybody has talked about us—very nearly; everybody knows except the people up here, and yet—and yet you turn me down, you send me away. Now, there must be another reason."

"No, no," she answered shortly, "never mind what my reasons are. I should think my indifference would be enough for you. Can't you go, Phil? Won't you leave me alone? Won't you take my answer?"

He had seized her hands again, and she patiently bore his insistence, thinking that she must get rid of him gently and not madden him too far. Knowing his tremendous excitement, recognizing the indications of his dissipation, she tried to temporize.

"Go at any rate now, Phil—go! We will talk it over to-morrow—some other time. I am nervous and I am sure that I heard the sound of rickshaw wheels."

"No, no," Collings interrupted, "there is nothing."

"I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless."

Mrs. Ranelagh's ears had been sharper than she realized. A rickshaw had indeed drawn up to the door of the house. A man got out of it, threw his cloak and hat and stick down on a settee on the veranda, and came noiselessly up to one of the long windows and stood there. Neither man nor woman saw him, however.

"Beatrice," Collings went on clearly, "if what you say is true there must be another man."

Mrs. Ranelagh heard him. Collings' back was turned on the onlooker in the eastern window and his words were not audible there. The silence of his mistress maddened Collings. He knew that it was a silent acquiescence of a great infidelity, but before he could make a further accusation Mrs. Ranelagh put her hand on his shoulder.

"Don't be absurd," she said, "don't be ridiculous. Of course, there is nobody in the world, Phil, but you."

She didn't mean it. She wanted to get rid of him. She knew of no other way.

"If it were not for my husband," she said, "why, everything would be all right, of course, you foolish boy."

Her words soft and kind—cruelly kind to one man, and a sentence of death to another—were heard by both men listening to her.

Collings gave a cry of insane delight as he caught her to him. The other man saw him do so, and saw his wife submit. For a long time the two figures stood in the beautiful bright twilight enlaced.

The man who had come up on the

veranda left his post at the window silently, walked down the steps and turned into the garden. Over the palace of Sidar hung the fine thread of the crescent moon, clear as silver. Against the pallid sky a flock of vultures flew, and from the open windows of the chapel came the evening hymn out upon the air:

"Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes."

Ranelagh Pasha stood for a moment, his face set and his eyes glued like those eyes that strain to see the borders of a very distant country. Around the rose-trees were in bloom. The oleanders, heavy and fragrant, brought their sickening odor to him. He put his hand to his hip pocket, and what he looked for he found.

In the drawing-room, Mrs. Ranelagh pushed Collings from her.

"Oh," she said, "how you make me despise myself! How you have made me lose my last atom of self-respect!"

She had taken a sudden courage and said to him now with a strength of which she did not know she was possessed: "Go, Philip Collings, go! And if you ever cross my path again I shall tell my husband."

"Hark!" she said, and this time she caught his arm and clung to it. The man and the woman stood standing, their faces toward the window that gave upon the garden. One short shot cut the air like a knife, one sharp sound, followed by the holy silence and the last fading note of Gordon's hymn, as the boy voices sent it out on the air.

CHAPTER V.

Toward the close of a January night the following year, after Shannon had piloted Collings into the interior, Philip stood between his tent-flaps gazing out into the profound beauty of the night. In the wide, tenantless distance he could hear the cry of a jackal searching for its prey. To his right his encampment gathered dark and huddling under the winter moon. The air was piercing cold and the sky garlanded with December stars.

Collings smoked and meditated and thought, and the pictures which his mind reviewed were very far away indeed from the Sudan. He could see again the green verdure of the Irish countryside. He could see again the eaves of a certain house he loved glimmer under the winter moon. Nothing could have been farther removed from him than this picture, nothing could have been in reality farther from him than the woman whose lovely image came before him here in the Sudan. He seemed to stand by her side as she played upon her harp, and heard her voice cut the silence in the waste till the desert was only a drawing-room in which a lovely woman sang. She sang a song which he specially liked:

"Where's a flute like the blackbird's note?
Where's a harp like the wind's?"

Collings saw the way her dark hair grew about her brows, he heard the beautiful quality of her mellow Irish voice. There were holiday wreaths in the latticed windows. There were the odor and charm of Christmas in the air, and the girl at her harp was the embodiment of sweetness and of home.

Collings, standing in his tent, stared deeply into the vast desert solitude. God, how uncompanioned he was! What difference did it make to anybody in the wide, wide world *what* he did, *where* he went? He threw his cigarette away and watched it die upon the sands. A little group of his servants, robed in the dark burnoose, huddled within a few yards of him. They began to sing in their wailing monotone and to strike upon their rude instruments.

This was the only melody that he was given to know. No picture came to him of Mrs. Ranelagh, whose husband had gone the way of all mortal men because of Collings. No vision came to him of anything but that Irish picture and that Irish girl before her harp. For long, its magic and its sweetness swayed him until unable to make the dearness of it his own—knowing that

its tenderness could be nothing to him, and that he stood there an outcast, a debauchee, a man, whom even the desert-plains would gladly forget—he turned mentally with an oath from the contemplation of his only love.

Just then, cutting the darkness, came a long peculiar cry which Collings knew heralded the arrival of a news-bearing messenger, and while he looked toward the west the dark outline of the camels from the Nile cut out of the clear sky their trenchant silhouettes.

He dived in his pocket for something more to smoke, lit the cigarette feverishly, ordered the natives to stop their cursed music, and when in a few moments was fetched in to him the mail-bag, which had traveled by land and water, over desert and plain for six long weeks, a packet fell into his lonely eager hands.

The packet was to form all his Christmas mail; a few newspapers and books sent in friendly recognition of his great prodigal generosity in times of debauch by the porter at the Grand Hotel. Of Collings' own family no one remained to him but his father, a retired army officer, living in an English seaport, and married to a woman who was no friend to the only son. There was not a single message from his own people. A bunch of documents from Khartoum with directions and instructions he laid aside, and sitting down on his camp-bed, drew his traveling-light toward him, and almost with the expectancy of love, opened his sole letter. It was from Robert Shannon. It began "My dear chap," and went on for eight closely written friendly pages. It was only a voice from Robert Shannon's Nile city, where the engineer himself was an exile. Collings read it through several times, folded it up and placed it in his pocket. There was no preaching in it; there was no advice; there was nothing but cheer and confidence. It ended with a "Merry Christmas, old man."

Collings walked out again into the night; he walked on facing the interior desert, his eyes set toward the east. There was a dogged expression on his face. He wore the look of a man who is swimming against a tide. When he had left his encampment well behind him he stood for a moment, stretched out his arms as though he implored some aid that not the garland of stars or the perfumed sands or the winds of the night could bring to him. After a little, his arms dropped listlessly, and with his head bent upon his breast, he slowly came back to his lonely tent, where above the apex the Southern Cross hung and made his only Christmas garland.

CHAPTER VI.

"Yes, that's Robert Shannon," Lady Northrup replied to her guests. "He's been at all sorts of extraordinary things up in the Sudan."

The girl who hung on her hostess' arm laughed sweetly. "That's rather vague, Dolly, and might be misinterpreted."

"Oh, I mean to say he's building extraordinary walls and things, founding towns and provinces."

"How do you do?" Lady Northrup cried to another guest. "For heaven's sake, Sylvia, go along with you, there's a duck! Get Northrup to introduce Robert Shannon to you, he's perfectly ripping. How do you do, Major Somers? Won't you please take Sylvia away for a bit and answer her questions like a good man?"

As the young man who came up gave his arm to the Honorable Sylvia Derbyshire, the young lady laughed in a most delicious fashion.

"Dolly *is* so heavenly at her balls, isn't she? She is *so* serious, I love to bother her—the idea of *founding* provinces!" She laughed musically. "I don't wonder Dolly called her man 'extraordinary,' he *would* be under these circumstances! No, Major Somers, not any ices, or the conservatory, but just *here!*"

The Honorable Sylvia Derbyshire sat down on a small sofa, spreading her shimmering gown about her, and out of it her bare neck and arms came

like warm ivory out of a colder sheath. There was a slender little garland of laurel on her dark head. The curling hair under the leaves ran brown as sister leaves at a later season. There were white gardenias in her bodice with her diamonds and they laid their glossy green against her breast.

The Honorable Sylvia had been singing; she had played for herself.

"Where's a flute like the blackbird's note?
Where's a harp like the wind's?"

And the big London room, filled with people satiated by constant feasts, on this evening kept quiet to listen to Miss Derbyshire's voice.

The man about whom she had asked Lady Northrup had listened with the others, and emotions which he had believed finished had stirred again with the music. Looking across the room to where Miss Derbyshire now sat on her little divan, he was afraid of her and fascinated by her as well.

When Somers said to him: "Come along, old fellow, and let me present you to the Honorable Sylvia Derbyshire," he lifted his eyeglass and returned: "Oh, don't bother. I'm just getting out of here—already late."

"Oh, rot!" His friend laughed at him politely. "You really can't run under fire. She's asked to meet you, do you know, and she sees us both now."

The "extraordinary" things which Robert Shannon had been doing in the Sudan had kept him six years out of England. He had gone away the poor youngest son of a poor Irish nobleman. He had come back still the youngest son and untitled, but with the solid distinction of a neat little fortune and the more brilliant stamp of success. The blue Nile and the warm shores had been friendly to him. He had opened up provinces and built towns and walls. He had furthermore gone in with a millionaire for the cotton speculation and come out with rather more than a competence. But he counted to be better than either money or reputation the friends that he had made.

He preferred walking away from Lady Northrup's rather than taking a hansom, and struck out into the warm London night, less fresh than his Sudanese breezes in the Nile country, less brilliant but lit with the golden radiance from the lemon-colored London lights, and in the luminosity the full-leaved trees rose like seaweed tufts or like patches of warm velvet in the parks.

The engineer was not busied with meditations on his colonial life, as he walked along, but with thoughts of the woman with whom for half an hour he had talked in Lady Northrup's music-room. He had seen her before and he remembered her. It was at the Dublin horse-show, seven or eight years ago, that he had seen her last, as she sat her mare on the fringe of the crowd. Young though she was, scarcely out of her teens, she had been indicated to him as the victim of an unhappy love-affair.

"Hopelessly in love," he had been told, "but the man is poor as Job. They cannot marry and it has nearly broken her heart."

These details had not been needed to make her interesting, the fact that she was "hopelessly in love" put her naturally away from him. To-night when he had seen her cross the room, his first thought had been: She does not look like a broken-hearted woman, she certainly has not pined away. And during her singing her voice had no ring of unhappiness to him, no wail of regret. Shannon found also that the passing years had only accumulated a finer beauty in her, added generously to her charms, and his old image of her grew dull as he looked on the more beautiful woman that she was.

The streets were very nearly deserted, and, smoking peacefully as he walked slowly along, the Irishman loitered to his chambers agreeably occupied recalling his last half-hour, and she left herself so vividly with him that it seemed almost as if he had fetched her, in her beautiful shining dress, to walk with him through the London streets.

The Honorable Sylvia had shown

herself very interested in his doings. "He had been all those years in the Sudan? What a far, far cry from London and how dreadfully interesting!" Of towns and buildings and engineering feats he soon saw she did not care to hear; nor had it indeed been long before he keenly perceived that every one of her questions, although they were direct and simple, were put with intent. When she discovered that he had been opening up Darshur she had helped his modesty to tell her *nothing* about it! After a few seconds she asked him if by any chance he had run across Major Forsyth, Reggie Forsyth, who had gone out some few years ago? When Shannon had quickly commented to himself: "Of course, *that's* the man," it took only a moment to tell what he knew of Forsyth, for it was little, and Miss Derbyshire helped him with a quick nod to dismiss the gentleman.

Then Shannon saw at once that he had been wrong in his conjecture. She asked after several Englishmen, and at each name Robert Shannon had taken a ditch and gone gaily on to come up again before the insurmountable obstacle of her complete indifference. *What* was the lady driving at? What was her ultimate goal? Had she any but a friendly interest in the men of whom she asked news?

Wanting enormously to hear of the woman herself he changed the topic, and for some time she talked delightfully to him, charming him with her point of view, with her intelligent reasonableness. When he had succeeded in finding out where the Honorable Sylvia was planning to spend the next week-end, the music at the other part of the room, in the shape of a Quatuor of Beethoven's, came to a sobbing close, and in the silence that fell around them Miss Derbyshire leaned forward to Shannon and asked:

"When you were—for I think that you said you had been in Dongola—when you *were* there, did you by any chance happen to run across a man called Collings?"

Here Shannon, looking up at his companion, saw a veil, as it might be, lift from her face and a brightness come into her expression; and with the man's name on her lips that remained parted, she waited. At that point, just as Shannon knew with a certainty that made him actually gasp, Lady Northrup came swimming across the room like a latine-boat in graceful sail.

"Sylvia, darling," she said, "you really, *really* will have to come. I am awfully sorry, Mr. Shannon, but you see we have let you monopolize Miss Derbyshire for quite all the evening and she really *must* sing to us; everybody is asking for 'When Colin Comes Again!' Sylvia, *be* a duck!"

Her companion felt that, as the girl crossed the long room to the piano, she carried Collings' name on her parted lips; and while he stood in the doorway toward which he at once had directed his steps and listened for the second time to her singing, he changed his mind about her voice. Its timbre and resonance and light and shade were love in its very essence.

CHAPTER VII.

Robert Shannon had seen many men come and go, forge their way, fail or succeed in the Sudan. He had been a spectator of what men's emotions, passions, and weaknesses lead them to do, as he had observed his countrymen and men of other races who came up into the new land with ambitious patriotic ideas, tried their personal luck or answered the commands of the government. One of his own chums, indeed, had come out at Shannon's instigation, fetching with him a certain amount of capital to invest in land speculation on the Blue Nile, and within the first fortnight the poor chap had died of enteric, and Shannon had nursed him through, at the peril of his own life, and he felt always that he was to blame in letting the boy risk the fever-stricken desert.

Pendenning, for instance, one of the chaps for whom Miss Derbyshire had asked, had conceived a passion for the Sudan, and longed to become a pioneer

there. He had left in Shannon's hands a certain sum of money to be employed in opening up the new country, "for cleaning up the Sudan," as poor Pen had expressed it; in speaking of his friend Robert Shannon's face had hardened while he told Miss Derbyshire about the bequest.

Shannon, in his own special, far-out-of-the-way province, where the high cane fetched its corridors up to the mystery of the river and where all the dark night, if his niggers were not alert, elephants might trample the whole encampment out of existence, Shannon—during months of exile in the African Nile border or in the rough inner country where the dervishes were hot with fanaticism; Shannon, accompanied by fellows who might cut him up if they could only come to some mutual decision as to how to do it; menaced by fevers and entirely shut away from any legitimate pleasure which a man craves—had grown to estimate and value commonplace, unostentatious drudgery above problematical heroism and perfunctory duties, to value worth far above chance displays of flashing devotion made for home mention. He knew a man when he saw him and when he ran up against the stuff that has a rotten fibre and a coarse dye he was, like every other decent Englishman, cruelly hard in his judgment.

He reached the library of his club and told himself that at this hour no one was likely to bother him and, off in his corner, drew his glass of whisky-and-soda over to him, and lit his cigarette. Then he sat back and sighed out, groaned out into the room: "My God! Collings!"

There was a mute appeal in his heart after this exclamation to the Power of Good to make his fear, his certitude groundless. But even as he appealed he saw the girl's beautiful lips on which Collings' name trembled. Loathsome facts which, when he had been forced into contact with them, remained impersonal, now rose up with sardonic impertinence and faced him across the space of table in his home-like club, and he revolted at being forced to invite them to take seats and make themselves at home.

He had, in his patriarchal freedom, at his town of Ringa, been able to thrust these facts through the tent-flaps into the night, but he could shut them out no longer, even if the affair was in no degree his own. Far more appalling—it was hers! What *should* he tell Miss Derbyshire?

He had been with Phil Collings at Eton, but Shannon had gone to Oxford and Collings to Cambridge, and after their boyhood days he had seen nothing at all of him for some years. Phil Collings had done him a little service at school and it had left in Shannon's mind the memory of a debt. It became one of those boyhood debts which, to pay up when the occasion offers, gives a man a peculiar satisfaction; and there are possibly no scores paid off more heavily or with bigger interest than those run up some school-day between sweet-shop and common, and discharged years afterward—any time before the End.

Collings had gone up into the Sudan with his company in 1900 and it was then—so Shannon supposed—that the definite parting between him and Sylvia Derbyshire had taken place. Whether the man had stayed away or torn himself away, or been put away from her Shannon of course did not know. There were certainly many reasons against the match, for the officer was very poor.

Collings had been out only from December until May, when he went back on sick-leave, and when Shannon saw him again it was in May of the following year. One afternoon of heavy storm Shannon drifted into the Grand Hotel at Khartoum to find Collings drinking a lemonade in the restaurant. He was not in uniform, he had thrown up his commission, he told Shannon, and as it was a known fact that those who have tasted Nile water come to drink it again, he had indeed come back to the Sudan; some magic about the place had drawn him there.

Robert Shannon had been on his way

to Ringa, his city on the Nile, and he left Khartoum that same day. When he saw Khartoum again, he saw Collings at the same time, and he saw him under peculiar circumstances. The facts left Shannon no longer in doubt about what the magic of the Sudan had been for Collings. Ranelagh Pasha, one night on his return from England, shot himself in his own garden, at eight o'clock one Sunday evening, when the palace chapel was melodious with Gordon's hymn.

In some way or other, Philip Collings had been turned over to Shannon. Shannon picked him up figuratively, and when he looked him in the face, he knew that he must begin from that moment to pay up his schoolboy debt.

Philip Collings was in a pitiable plight just then. Mrs. Ranelagh, in spite of the fact that she was a widow, wouldn't even see him. Shannon spent several hours at the palace in the company of the Sirdar, and because of Shannon's plea and for the honor of the new country, the whole thing was hushed up, and late the same evening Philip Collings came aboard of Shannon's boat with his traps, and the two men started off together for Abyssinia and the Blue Nile.

On the way up there through those heavenly waters, the long intimacy and silence, there were many pages open to Shannon of books he would never have chosen to read, and there became something sublime in the engineer's idea that Collings might, by devotion to colonizing projects, cleanse himself, restore decency to his past—even achieve distinction; at any rate, serve one or another of the country's purposes; and strengthened by his hope and belief, he linked his arm in the arm of the worn-out debauchee and pushed with him up the Nile.

At this time the slave trade was a peculiarly ugly sore in the Sudan.

Robert Shannon had formed a civil commission to supplement and support the work of the government in the cleaning out of the slave business, and Collings was to support one arm of the law. Shannon started him forth with ample protection, with a little band of Sudanese commanded by an Egyptian and an amazing supply of funds. Collings was a Don Juan, but there hadn't been a breath against his courage or his honor, and the Sudan and Shannon's friendship gave him a fine chance. Thus sent to penetrate into the desert, to watch for caravans and the pirates of slave-dealing, to lie in wait for traders and to stop what he could of the traffic, Shannon saw him—Collings—go forth, and he himself turned back to the city of Ringa, his daughter of the desert born between River and Waste.

Several months went by between hard work and loneliness and big-game hunting. A letter finally came from Collings; he was enthusiastic, they had captured and freed over a thousand slaves, his reports were well in hand and he would send them in shortly; meanwhile, "it took a lot of money to keep the machine going," and they needed new supplies and ammunition and so forth.

Shannon thought of the little legacy poor Pendenning had destined for the cleaning-up of the new land. Slave-trading was the dirtiest blot on the country, there wasn't any doubt about that. Shannon saw no reason why he shouldn't send in Pendenning's fund to stop the traffic in human life.

Collings' reports did not come to the Sudan; but down in Cairo, the following year, the Egyptian who had charge of the fifty natives *did* come in, and it was a peculiar phase of loyalty and devotion that it was to the civilian Shannon and not to any government representative that the man made his report.

Phil Collings' accounts were handed in at last! Shannon, when he stared and groaned and heard, stayed up all night figuring how soon he could pay back to the government what Collings had stolen of the public fund advanced, and how much it was his duty to tell the Anglo-Egyptian government the whole truth. The Egyptian refugee did not know where Bimbashi Collings

was, the last *he* had seen of him he was off to Gondoroko with a group of slaves.

The Sirdar himself chanced to be in Cairo, and poor Shannon went to see him again with a mortification like nausea in his mouth.

The censor of morals had effectually hushed up the Ranelagh scandal, and the government this time—once all the money advanced was paid back out of Shannon's private fortune—hushed up the slave scandal, and the name of Collings was stricken out of the new country which he might have helped to cleanse.

But Robert Shannon's school debt, contracted between sweet-shop and common, with ridiculous insistence cried out "Not paid yet." For one night Phil Collings himself came to Cairo and slunk into Shannon's rooms at Shepheard's on the very week the engineer was going home to England.

The other man had traveled in native dress all the way from Dongola with a native caravan. He was covered with stain and burn. Still there was a debonair manner about him, and much assurance. He did not, so he told Shannon, have "a penny in the whole wide world." Of *course* he could not go back to England, and of *course* he could not stop on here. He knew a man who was raising coffee in Brazil, he thought that perhaps if he could get down there——

Between Phil Collings and Shannon there seemed to rise an English lane, and down it two little chaps in Eton clothes went back to school. Small Bob Shannon's pockets were filled with Phil Collings' allowance-money; the boy had given his chum all he had and the other could at last pay up his little debts which had tortured his soul.

Shannon put Collings on the P. & O. steamer for Liverpool, sent him out, and set him up in South America; and this time he drew a long breath of relief and thought perhaps after all poor Pendenning's money and his own *had* helped to clean up the new country, for it had cleaned Collings out of it!

"A man called Collings!" Heavens, yes, he knew *him!*

The hour was late, and the engineer the last man in the clubroom. Out through the windows opening on St. James Park long shafts of the moon fell, in vague light which lost its radiance in the thick dark trees.

Yes, he knew him! And he knew, too, that he loved this woman with her flute-voice and her Irish beauty. What should he tell her—*what* should he tell her of the man whom he had cleaned out of the Sudan?

CHAPTER VIII.

Shannon had time to put the question before himself as tranquilly as he might during the week they both spent at Dunkilly. It was the week of the horse show, and there was a large house-party at the Northrups', and in its vortex Shannon lost her. His occasions for seeing her alone were only those which he made himself, and his state of mind was such that, although he wanted more than anything else to be with her, he avoided her; he dreaded taking up the question he had not answered at Lady Northrup's ball.

As Shannon observed Miss Derbyshire from his little pagoda of doubt and trouble, from his little isolated house to which he retired, he could see that she had plenty of spirit and temper. She was witty and flashing. Her voice was a delight, and her riding another. And, whereas Shannon saw her snatched away by admirers and adorers, riding to the hounds with Lord This and golfing with Lord That, and adored and greeted by one and all, he was so vain as to fancy that he could have drawn Miss Derbyshire to him at any moment, not because he was so attractive, *pardi*, but because—because he knew about Collings!

But Shannon affirmed obstinately to himself as he watched her, and as he loved her more, that so long as Collings' name was between them he would make no effort to draw her at all. That until he could exist for her, until she lifted up those lake-like eyes and saw *him*, Robert Shannon, he would make no sign to this lady.

Now and then circumstances would find them alone for a second, and his thoughts would kindle, but to his surprise Miss Derbyshire never drew him near the dreaded theme.

Little by little his puzzle grew less absorbing, and in her presence more and more, as she gave him leave, he began to think of themselves.

The large house-party broke up at length and scattered, and Shannon's horse fell with him and the poor fellow was laid up at the castle for a fortnight. He was left utterly alone with the governess and a half-dozen of the Dunkilly children, for his hosts—once he was out of any immediate need of them—packed themselves off to London; and it was only on the second day, when he limped down-stairs to the terrace between two footmen to stretch himself out in his long chair, that he discovered Miss Derbyshire had stayed on as well. During his confinement in his room she had sent him no message, asked no news of him, but she came now across the park with the children and she sailed in their midst like a white dove with her brood.

She had a basket of ripe strawberries on her arm, and the children's mouths were all stained. She said to Shannon, as she threw the children off and sent them into schoolroom tea:

"There was a strong majority in the house to keep me when the others went and before I knew it the bill was passed. I am staying on until Sir Patrick and Dolly come back on Sunday to take the children to the sea. Please don't stir, don't move, we'll have our tea together here. It's awfully jolly to see you down again, Mr. Shannon."

If she had really waited for six years faithful to her ideal of one man, Shannon thought as they chatted and she made him his tea, she had been a brave lover, for the men about her who loved her made it as hard as they knew how for a woman to remain faithful. What if it were a delusion, this Collings business, and what if it should transpire she were free? Well, it was his chance in that case! He had an Irish heart as well as she; he had an impatience and hatred of secrecy, he was extremely frank and mysteries bored him. He longed to thrust the spectre of Collings aside; he wanted to ride straight, but how could he do so? Could he give her an evasive answer when she asked, for she would, she would! She wasn't a woman to be satisfied with that. She'd go on persistently, she'd ask others, and she'd find out; naturally, some other man would tell her. She had waited six years. Whose hand was it going to be that would unlock those merciful doors?

Were they merciful doors? Is there any mercy in false estimates? What good can there be in a lie? What good in any delusion?

The Irishman lying there in his long chair was as direct as the sunlight. He knew indeed so little about lies that his opinion concerning them was scarcely worth having. But he was no fool, no awkward handler of fine situations. There was too much of the Celt in him not to feel for points finely, but he loved this beautiful woman, and the white hands that came so near to him as they served him carefully, her flute-like voice, her look, and her speech. He came down from his pagoda, kicked the ruins behind him, and stood figuratively beside her on terra firma.

"You will be soon fit again to go back to your Nile villages," she said. "What a pity you came that nasty cropper!"

And he said he would not have missed his fall for the world.

During the hour and a half the lady gave him of her presence there was no mention of Collings, or, indeed, anything more personal than comments on the lovely Irish landscape and the country and a little of themselves.

He had the pleasure of seeing that her avoidance of the bête-noir was intentional and he could enjoy her without fear. During one afternoon, at least, Collings would not pop out at them. And eagerly, with as much delicacy as he was master of, he began his own campaign.

Before dinner Miss Derbyshire went into the drawing-room and sang from

there to him, and her voice touched him so that he was glad she did not come back again to the terrace when she had finished, but that she left him where he sat alone and went on upstairs to dress for dinner. He was glad, for he would have been rash to distraction and if she had come out to him there he must have told her that he loved her.

The man, for a day or two longer, was forced simply to wonder at her from his chair, to watch for her chance comings and goings, to listen to her voice as it sang to him, and as it mingled with the children's. He had definitely descended from his pagoda, indeed, he was a prisoner at a woman's mercy; she came when she would, and talked to him through the bars, but she did not fetch him any food.

But every day more and more he threw Collings and every other man to the winds of Fate, and when, at length, he was able to take his first walk abroad he took it with Miss Derbyshire. The lady offered him her arm on one side—he had his stick to lean on, but managed fairly well—and the children, safely in hand, kept at home in some fastness or other with which schoolrooms bristle, Shannon and the Honorable Sylvia made their way to the terrace slope, he sauntering in the *dolce far niente* of a midsummer afternoon and she floating like a bird at his side.

Dunkilly had its ruins and some proud bit of history. The soft velvet beauty of the place they sought was surrounded by the cold of its tradition. Over the ten feet of broken wall of yellow boulders whose crests were green and soft with moss, jutted out the remnants of an abbey tower, its black veneer glowing like the sombre body of a moth in the sun.

The man, with a little assistance of the sort that sent his blood tingling, climbed up the few steps to the level where the slight hill dominated the rolling meadows dotted over by harvesters, singing like a distant hive with harvest songs at the end of their scythes.

A pile of crumbling stones, with a smooth seat in the middle, made a resting place for the two; and facing toward Dunkilly and its towers, the Honorable Sylvia and Shannon found themselves away from the world and together for the first time.

He had asked for a walk with one idea, and had suggested the ruins as an aim, but with the singular procrastination to which every man in love is prone to yield—on the threshold of his confession, he waited, and her silence gave him a leave which he extended too long. He thought afterward he should have spoken in those golden few moments, when the joy of her nearness and her lovely presence let him bask in a sunlight already too fleeting. For just as he luxuriously and happily turned his eyes from the August fields and their forest borders to look at her, she said to him abruptly:

"You remember that night at Lady Northrup's? I asked you a question about a man called Phil Collings. Won't you please tell me all you know of him, for I think you were together in the Sudan?"

Her voice was a wand strong enough to shatter in a moment his beautiful castle. His stick was in his hand, he moved it gently among little crumbling pebbles at his feet.

"I saw," she continued, "in that second when I asked you about Phil that you knew a great deal about him. I should be so glad if you would tell me now."

Shannon was saying to himself and to the little stones at his stick's point that: "As far as I am myself concerned, I might as well speak to that tower at our side; that is, while she cares for what she thinks Collings is."

"What do you want to know?"

"Oh, I am right!" she cried eagerly. "You do, you do know him! Oh, I believe I am right as well in thinking that you fight shy of my question."

He was looking down at his pattern in the earth, and she was looking at him.

"I am afraid I can't tell you very much. I haven't seen Collings for twelve months, nor have I had any news of him."

"Twelve months! Twelve months!

It seems like yesterday when you compare it with six years! Was Phil well? Was he prosperous when you heard from him last?"

Shannon left the crumbling stones alone; he sat up straight.

"I saw him in Cairo, he seemed well—as for being prosperous, I don't think he was rich."

"No," she said, with a long breath, "no, that was it, wasn't it? He was so terribly poor from the start. Nothing ever seemed to go well with him. He never had any luck." She waited a second, which Shannon made eloquent, then asked: "And from Cairo, do you know where he went then?"

"He went to South America," Shannon answered, "to a coffee plantation, I believe. Some friends of his took him in."

Miss Derbyshire accepted the long distance that her companion indicated, and the idea of the journey from tropic to tropic without making any remark until, with a loosening of what Shannon felt must be a great tension of suspense, she said: "Then you know where he is? *You* know, and at last *I* know."

The man quickly contradicted. "I can't say *that*, quite! South America is a big place, and ranches are like the Irish tariff, all over it. I haven't really the faintest notion where he is."

But she was not discouraged. For the first time in six years a living voice had told her where her lover was, and even if he were in the heart of another continent from this one, still the knowledge of his distant place was like a pinprick on the map; she saw the star it made. All South America spun round Collings' ranch.

The Honorable Sylvia's companion watched her intently. It was *he* who was three thousand—three thousand miles away! And Shannon was sure that if she should put out her lovely hand, made for caresses and to caress, it would be Collings' hand the touch would meet, not his own lying near her on the stones. A horrible revulsion rose in him, not hatred, not jealousy even, though he loved her, but horror at the creature whom this woman's adoration drew from the antipodes, and actually made stand before them there. For Shannon believed there wasn't a moral spot in Collings' whole body, and sure there wasn't a clean inch of him.

The Honorable Sylvia, in her white frock, in her white shoes, in her white hat, might have been an orchid sprung up from the very stones. There were so peerless and fine a quality in her, so transparent a fibre; and the long suppleness, the perfect mould of her Irish body, the race and birth and blood and caste she represented, were so splendid.

"My God!" he again said for the hundredth time, "Collings!"

Shannon took his hat off and laid it on the stones between them; his head thus bared caught the full light of the sun, whose course over the wonderful fields was one long path of glory. His hair was reddish, it had been curly, but the ends showed the obstinate cut; it was a thick, splendid crop, growing low on his brow; a woman's touch might have liked to rest on that shining head there as the sun came and laid its hand upon it.

"Why," he said, "do you ask me about this man?"

"He was an old friend."

And Shannon said: "When I saw you in Ireland some six years ago I understood that you were engaged to Collings. Was that true? Afterward I heard the engagement was broken. Is any of that true?"

"Yes; all of it."

He did not say that he had heard her heart was broken.

"Shortly after this Collings came up to us in Khartoum."

She bowed her head.

"I saw him a little, here and there, as one sees men up the river. I was a slow-going, busy chap, and absorbed in my stupid work for years."

The girl stirred gently the hand lying between them on the sunny stones.

"Tell me—everything."

He shook his head.

"There are other men," he urged doggedly, "who knew Collings."

"But I don't know them," she replied

patiently. "I shall never see any of them."

"Write to them, get Lady Northrup to look it up for you."

"Why should I ask them if I should not ask you? Why?"

He was silent, and she answered her own question.

"I ask you because I know that you will tell me the truth."

"And that is what you want?"

"Yes, and I ask it of you from man to man, as you say, from beginning to end."

Well, he had his permission, if that was what he was waiting for! He had full leave to put the black-hearted Collings before the woman who loved him, in his true colors.

"I am sorry," Shannon said slowly, "that I cannot do what you ask of me. I really know nothing about him in detail, except that he went to South America."

Here Miss Derbyshire rose and went a little distance down the path, and he could see her standing like a white break in the woodlands; then she came back to him and faced him with paling cheeks.

"I have stopped on at Dunkilly, Mr. Shannon, to ask you this question. I have lived and lived for this moment ever since we first met. I have waited six years to hear it. It may be hard for you to tell me what you have to tell, but I think you should forget yourself. Can't you—can't you think of me? Can't you be honest with me? If there is anything good in it all wouldn't you be generous enough to tell me? And if it's all dreadfully bad, don't you think a woman who has waited for so long ought to know?"

She came back to the seat she had left. She took her place once more there, and clasping her hands she said:

"I implore you, Mr. Shannon."

The blood rushed hotly into his face. He cursed Collings under his breath. "Let me," he stammered, "speak to you of something else."

She shook her head. "No, no, nothing else. There is nothing else in the world I want to hear." And he took it as her answer to his own unspoken words and bent his head.

After a few seconds he raised his face again, and it had hardened.

"I expect I should be thankful that you are only the woman who loves him, and not the man's mother to whom I must tell the things you ask to hear."

And Shannon began.

He did not linger over the story of the Khartoum scandal, and all through his generous nature and his clean temper showed in the way that he did *not* tell her many things! Indeed, he had enough to work with in the main, and could have easily made the most faithful of women jealous, loathing, revolting from their ideal. But he glided over much, and went at once with Collings and himself up the river to the camp on the Blue Nile, and from there to the inner desert.

The engineer gave the Honorable Sylvia a good idea of the river settlement, of the mixture of savage and civilized existence, of the twentieth century military and civil life in the Englander's desert. She saw the starting out of Collings on his mission; indeed, she might draw a picture of him as he went toward the Abyssinian line, or had she chosen she might have remained behind in Shannon's own modest encampment between the Nile and the interior. But the more commonplace figure of the British civilian, who, according to Lady Northrup, "made provinces in Africa," did not hold the woman; she went with Collings.

A sort of hard justice crept into his tone as he went on, his hardness showed in his voice, and he grew pitiless as he described Collings' dishonesty and dishonor—pitiless as a man can be when sounding venal laxities, pitiless as he could not in the least have been in his story of Khartoum, had he told it to his hearer.

"Stop, please, stop!" Her voice was the first sign she had given for a long while, and it fetched him back to Ireland from the Sudan, and to the fact that he was telling in a cruel fashion a man's life to a woman who cared. "Please stop a minute. I want to un-

derstand if I can. Don't let me mistake or mishear. Do you want me to gather that he—he took the funds the government sent him for his mission, and bought slaves, and that he sold the slaves again? Do you want me to understand that he corrupted his men, and kept the leaders in captivity until finally one of them escaped and told?"

"Well, some of the men died of plague, some were natives of the province he passed through, he sent some of them back to their wives."

"Oh, don't try to palliate *now!*" she cried passionately. "Don't throw one drop of clear water into the sea of ink you have made. You tell me he entered the slave-traffic against the government, that he became a trader and a thief?"

How she put it, looking at him across the twilight, her beautiful face colorless except for those lovely Irish eyes, where even the azure had darkened and grown black and sombre!

Oh, she knew that he had meant it all, and that every word of it was true. She was familiar with honor, and she knew that the man before her possessed the soul of it, and she shivered at the horror he presented to her as though he had uncovered a hydra.

"Who else knows this beside you, Mr. Shannon?"

"Those who were with him, people in the government. Oh, they had to know it," he said apologetically, "and in the way they did, or Collings would have been shot. What I am telling you is a state affair, it is a matter of utter secrecy." It suddenly came to him that he might have refused to tell her on this very good ground. "I needn't ask you to guard it," he said quickly. "Collings' life more or less depends on its being kept dark."

Not once during the whole story had he fetched his own name into the question, nor had he suggested in any way the part he had played. That went without saying. Not any more than he would have told her how he paid his tailor or his haberdasher. He had tried to pay up to Collings, and any further display of humanity on his part than the just discharge of his boyhood claim he did not know himself that he had performed. So of course she was in ignorance of it. Just as he had kept out the details in the Khartoum affair, so he scrupulously shut away the more disastrous details of Collings' life in the desert. It was bad enough, vile enough as it stood, and Shannon let it stand, to be struck at any moment by a blow of justice and by this woman's reproach.

But there was evidently not a weapon in her hand to deal a blow. As he stopped she cried, angry with herself—at her own heart:

"How hard you are! How hard you are! In every word you say, in every tone! How you judge him, how you blame him! How brutal!"

Wasn't it curious that it was at him she should strike her blows? And they made him wince.

"I don't see that there is any question of personal justice in this matter," he said simply. "I don't think there are two ways of looking at such a state of affairs."

"*Two ways!*" she cried. "There are thousands. How he must have suffered, how he must have changed to fall so low! What bitterness of heart, what solitude, what reckless defiance of Fate!"

He stared.

"You mean to say," he asked slowly, "that you excuse him?"

She laughed.

"Excuse! What am I, to excuse or judge, Mr. Shannon? Phil had his judges, and if they didn't shoot him it was only for England's sake, for an *esprit de corps*, or for a lot of cold-blooded reasons. He is judged enough, exiled to that dreadful South America alone. He is condemned enough, enough for you to say he can never come to England with safety. He may never see home again. He is a man without a country—even without a name. Poor Phil! Poor, poor Phil!"

He was terribly shocked, and terribly fascinated. The woman's beauty, the light way in which she took the crime, for a second made his love for her, his admiration of her reel. His trite argu-

ments for code, honor, and principle he felt would be chaff before this wind of tender blindness which, if it were folly, was also divine in mercy. She had been told nothing of his own mercy and comradeship wtih Collings. He must let her judge him as she would.

"And you," she accused bitterly, with acridity he could not understand, "and you with your position and your honorable, stainless career, your unchallenged record, how you must have scorned Phil, how you must scorn him still!"

Shannon had not walked farther than the terrace until this afternoon for ten days, and the pull, short as it was, had been as much as his bad leg could stand. A dull ache began to creep along his thigh to his ankle, and a spasm of pain crossed his forehead, but the woman's eyes, in which her resentment glowed in full force, were more cruel than physical pain. If he did not get up and out now, before this infernal crisis of pain in his leg should set it to stiffness, he saw that he would not be able to walk back to the castle.

He exclaimed bitterly:

"Do men have to steal and betray and make blackguards of themselves to win a woman's pity?"

He rose with an effort from his seat, leaning hard on the bench side and on his cane. He leaned indeed so hard that his stick snapped in two, and he would have fallen heavily forward if the Honorable Sylvia had not sprung to him; he ignominiously caught at her and gained his equilibrium by her help.

"I am *so* sorry!" she cried. "You have sat here too long, far too long. I was thoughtless, it is the first time you are out after your hurt, and you won't be able to manage back, will you? I think I'll hurry to Dunkilly, and send you your man to help you."

One of his hands rested on the stone seat, the other on her arm. The human contact, the touch of her, the sense of her so near to him mastered in him every feeling but his love—it made him brutal. He said deeply:

"I cannot get down these steps and across these fields to Dunkilly without *this* to lean upon." He grasped her soft arm. "Without this to lean on, and to lean hard upon it, too, and its support would mean nothing but pity for me—nothing but pity in my weakness."

"And you despise my pity?"

"I suppose it has some part with another feeling, but pity won't do for *me* to begin on, and I don't think I'd even like it at the last."

It was still light, the tranquil twilight of midsummer lay like a limpid day over the land. There was the distant tinkle of the cattle-bell, a whip-poor-will called from the woods at their hand. Shannon, by the rude old stone bench, very pale, his thick, close-curling hair around his clear brow where no lines of distress or despair called upon a woman for sympathy, stood looking at her almost sternly.

"I'm afraid you *are* horribly seedy," she said gently, "and we've not got a bit of anything to brace you up. I am going to hurry away. Do you think you will be able to make out until some one comes?"

"Oh, oh, quite, quite," he assured her. "Please don't bother."

She started to speak, then hesitated. "You think—after all—you wouldn't rather try to come down with just me? I am fearfully strong, you know."

"Thank you, I'll wait here."

"But I think you *had* better move on. Come!" She held out her fine white hand, her fine arm. The loose sleeve of her bodice stopped short at her elbow. It was not too dark to see the smooth white flesh and blue tracery of the little veins. Shannon took a step or two toward her.

"Come," she urged, and smiled at him for the first time. "If I promise not to do it for pity's sake, will you come then?"

"For what reason will you help me down, then?" he asked obstinately, and she laughed.

"For duty, Mr. Shannon, for plain duty, because you are wounded, and I happen to be the first Samaritan."

He picked up his hat from the seat and put it on and took her arm. Then managed with great difficulty to get

down the short steps to the level, but he would have undergone a thousand pains to walk like this with the snow-white support beneath his arm; they were very long in going through the fields.

On either side the stacks of wheat were piled from the day's harvesting, and across the meadows, not half a mile away, the towers of Dunkilly arose, and over one of them hung the evening star.

CHAPTER IX.

During his lifetime Shannon had always intelligently built toward those things which he believed would stand. He could not have planned encircling walls such as those whose amber and snow held up the Nile city if he had believed that the sucking river and the washing tide would have worn them away. No matter how ravishing the outlook on the heavenly Nile might be, he could have built nothing but that which would endure.

This went with him in sequence through his life; he was not a dreamer, though he had his visions; whatever touched his mind and fancy he gave form to, and if the illusion shook its wings too long above his reach, being neither a gazer nor a poet, he left the butterfly and went on. Hitherto his well-regulated life, successful and complete, gave him no precedent for the mental havoc a woman had made with him.

He had settled the following day for starting away from Dunkilly, and half an hour before his leaving he found the Honorable Sylvia on the terrace with the children.

"You won't mind, Mr. Shannon," she said, "having the bigger children, Norah and Nick, with you in the motor, as far as the station only. They are to go on, their mother has telegraphed to the governess to meet her at Hunstanton. Dolly and Pat are *not* coming home for the week-end, after all."

The Honorable Sylvia's companions were all of them, as far as their tender age would permit, warm friends and pals of Robert Shannon, and they waved their pails and shovels at him.

"*Last* year's pails and shovels, Uncle Bob! Aren't we wonderful to have kept them?"

"Come along, babies!" cried the eldest boy. "Let's rush out and see the bunnies once more."

"Mr. Shannon," Miss Derbyshire said quickly, when they were alone, "you didn't tell me last night where Phil is to be reached. I mean his exact address. You are sure to have it."

Shannon hesitated.

"I have *some* sort of a direction or other," he admitted unwillingly. "I'll look it up in my papers as soon as I get to town."

"Oh, at once, won't you?" Then she cried, again ablaze: "And so you let him go without taking an address from him, quite alone and quite poor—I think you said he was quite poor?"

After a second filled in with the children who had again raced back, their arms filled with rabbits, Sylvia went on:

"Because it's through you I have known of this, I am going to tell you what I have decided to do as soon as I find out where Phil is. I am going out to him."

"Going out to Collings!" Shannon repeated, in horror. "But you don't know what you say."

She ignored his impulsive cry, and said quietly: "I am quite free, there is no one to say yes or no to anything I choose to do. I quite know what I am doing, and I am going out to Phil."

But Shannon broke forth brutally: "Then *I* forbid you. I admit how entirely nothing I am—not even an old friend—but I am a man, and I know that nothing could be more headstrong, more reckless, more mad, more dreadful! But you are not serious. At least, your friends will prevent you, and if they don't, I will."

"*Really.*" He was too stern to appreciate her anger. "Mr. Shannon, you are preposterous! I have told you this because I wish you to know, because I want you to tell me where Phil is, and I ask you now never to refer to the matter again."

"Then I will disobey you," he said

warmly. "I shall leave you and your wonderful élan to be admired by other people. It seems to me madness! You don't know, you don't dream——"

"There are only a few moments to your leaving," she said coldly, and now he saw how very angry she was. "If you say another word I shall leave you without good-by."

He urged doggedly: "Nevertheless, let me speak."

"No," she flashed at him, "not another word!"

He bowed his head and shrugged, and so they stood enemies for a few seconds during his last moments at Dunkilly, and he was beaten and maddened by her obstinate determination.

And then Shannon's good heart, his big generous heart, which had made his Sudanese servant say that "he would kill his life for Effendi Shannon," spoke louder than his passion. With the very first frankness which his love for her had permitted him, he put his hand out to the woman.

"Then, if you are *really* going to South America, let me help you to go. Let me get information for you! You need a certain amount of stupid masculine help. Let *me* look up your routes, etc."

She shook her head.

"Least of all, you!"

"Why, pray?"

"Why, I am surprised you even ask. You understand subtleties so well. You taught them to me yesterday."

"You won't accept my help because you think it's pity?"

She faintly smiled.

Shannon cried: "Nonsense, this is a serious matter—don't make light of your folly! Let me help you through."

"Help me to go to Phil?"

"Yes, for your sake."

"No, then, no!"

And this time he was forced to fetch up with an honest curse the school-days whose cost he thought had been paid. Still, he was able to say:

"Well, then, for Collings, himself, yes—let me help *him*."

"Why," she asked, "didn't you stand by him then when he was friendless and desperate?"

He thought to himself: "Oh, never mind, it would only be a lump of sugar she'd give me, and at least I can't jump for it like a dog."

But the Honorable Sylvia went on: "Well, in spite of yourself, Mr. Shannon, you have done him the biggest service yet."

"How?"

"Why, by telling me as you did, in the way you did, with brutal truth, that miserable story. Don't you see, don't you realize that you *have sent me to Phil?* You have sent me to him, you have given him the one thing he has wanted all his life."

Shannon's long breath was something like a groan.

"I see," he murmured. "I *have* sent you out to him!"

He leaned heavily on his stick and stared at her. His way of telling it! He had made himself and all the others in the Sudan, by his fear of letting slip the truth of his own friendly aid, he had made them all brutes and made Collings a martyr! The rest of them were all heathens of injustice in her eyes! In his anxiety to hide the scandals too blatant for her ears he had—well, never mind, he must undo it now.

"I want you to let me tell you just one thing," he said.

The scant friendliness she had shown him died. "If you speak of Phil again," she said, "if you malign him any more to me, I shall leave you with the children, to go alone.'

And then she broke in humorously: "Don't you see that I must go, and make what I have marred, for I have done some bad work in Phil's life. I must help him to a new life—he wasn't like that before, you know."

Shannon cried out here: "What are you saying!" For her look upon him was so sudden, so strong. "Do you mean to say that you are going out for the sake of——"

She put out her hand and stopped him.

"I have no account to give you, Mr. Shannon, no account of any kind."

And here the children gathered round and the motor came up to the side of the terrace.

"Of course, I don't understand you," he said desperately, "no man ever does understand a woman; the very things I should have thought would have revolted you, disgusted you, have drawn you to a man, across a continent. But nevertheless, for whatever reason you are going, I want to see you through."

"You refused my help yesterday, you would have let me leave you on a hillock for your pride. Please let me leave you there now."

"Oh, my pride has gone!" cried Shannon. "I take the smallest thing you give me."

"I have nothing to offer, Mr. Shannon."

"But I have," he urged ardently, and caught her hand. "I have, and I offer it all."

She nodded. "For me, yes, I know." Her eyelids flickered. She withdrew her hand.

The children rushing in between and calling to him over the rabbits they begged to be allowed to carry "only as far as the gate," intercepted the meeting of Shannon's hand and hers again, but over the babble her voice was unshaken in its refusal of everything he offered.

"*I* am proud, if you are not, Mr. Shannon. I am proud for Phil and me, and the only thing you can do for us is to forget me, as completely as you have been able to forget him all this time."

Once more, above Norah's curls and sun-hat, Shannon strove to take Sylvia's hand, and succeeded, and she retained him from some latent feeling that he needed some other support than his cane, so he went half led by her to the car. Once in the motor, he leaned across the children's heads, the pails and shovels, and said earnestly:

"If you do go to South America—if you do—ask Collings for me if he recollects the day at school when we were little chaps. He lent me all his allowance, to pay up a lot of things. Tell him for me he might send along a receipted account, *for I rather think I have paid in full.*"

As Shannon left her, she was smiling at the children, but he thought that she smiled last and longest at him.

He left her so, standing in the August sunlight on the terrace with its brightness round her—and the smallest and shrillest of the Dunkilly brood clinging to her, and waving their little hands.

After a conscientious search through his papers, Shannon was never so glad of anything as of the fact that he had honestly no trace of Collings, and that from a clear heart he could therefore tell her this. He wrote her as soon as he had made sure; but the long letter, the letter his conscience told him he must write her before she wrecked his life, he never found courage to send, for after filling many pages, dissatisfied, he destroyed his sheets and determined himself to go back and find her and tell her all he knew.

But when he reached the house of the people with whom she had been stopping during the fortnight which had elapsed between their parting at Dunkilly and this day, he found that he had come too late. The Honorable Sylvia Derbyshire had been gone just twenty-four hours. She had sailed for South America. Somebody better informed than himself had found out Collings' whereabouts, and before any other route than the one she had taken could transport Shannon to Brazil she would have joined the other man.

The news was told him by his hostess at tea, in the most matter-of-fact fashion, between lumps of sugar and milk and toast and hot water.

"You see," Lady Northrup, who was up from the sea and in town for the day, told him, "she had been engaged years ago to a man called Phil Collings. He was in the Hussars. For some reason or other it had been broken off, but every one knew how she cared for him, and now he is off somewhere in South America making coffee or something of the kind, and cannot come on, so she has gone out to him. She is horribly wilful, and she has all in her own right,

you see. She took nobody with her but an old servant who had been her nurse in childhood." Lady Northrup gave Shannon his cup. "She might have married any one she liked, you know, scores of times! Why," she asked keenly, "why *didn't* you stop her, Mr. Shannon?"

"It was beyond my power, Lady Northrup."

"Nonsense! She took a great fancy to you, she asked me a dozen questions the night of the ball, where you met her first. She bothered me to death about you. *Why* didn't you marry Sylvia yourself?"

"My dear Lady Northrup," Shannon replied. "She wanted to know me simply because I knew Collings."

His hostess gave a little shriek.

"You *did*, you knew this paragon, this magnet that has drawn her across the ocean?"

"Yes, in the Sudan."

"Then come here," she cried, patting the sofa beside her. "Get up and come here and tell me all you know."

She made a place for the founder of provinces and builder of desert cities by her side.

CHAPTER X.

He grew during the next two years to pity Sylvia so deeply that he wondered, in case she should ever know the quality of his feeling, if she on her part would object to it as *he* had objected to her pity? For out of the passion he had not declared, alongside of his tender solicitude, went this merciful love which, since it could not spare her anything, suffered with her. Divinest pity went with her every step of her way.

At once after Lady Northrup's information, Shannon, whose procrastination had cost him the chance to tell Sylvia how he loved her, Shannon himself, stimulated by the Honorable Sylvia's bold act, followed her to Brazil on the fastest boat. It was not to get anything for himself out of going, but to do what he might for them. For *them*, indeed, so it proved when he reached Bluazes, for she had married Phil Collings. From his distance, quite undreamed of by her, Shannon did much; and before any one had suspected his presence he had returned to England, after securing for Collings a post representing a certain amount of dignity in Brazil.

Robert Shannon in Bluazes had been much surprised to find that his man had *not* changed his name. "Well," Shannon thought, "by heavens, Phil has his chance now, if ever a man had one!"

In Shannon's own silent small space, far up the Blue Nile, as many memories as he liked to invite came to him, and when his work was done or put aside—calculations, plans, and reports laid for a moment away—he would sit smoking in his tent and give the suggestions their will. Nothing real existed for him but the woman in South America who from love or pity had gone to another man. He tortured himself with wondering whether if he had spoken and told her of his love it would have made any difference.

Only men in books live in ignorance of the women they love when those women have passed from their environment. Shannon, in his exile, where it took seven weeks for a letter to come in and where telegrams were fetched by camel and caravan and motor across river and desert, and through forests to his very tent-flap, found means to know. He gathered scant knowledge, it is true, but still it was knowledge, and he found to his wonder and surprise that Collings had been pulled up to an astounding height. A woman had lifted him and was holding him high.

So far as Shannon was concerned the whole district of his own province was redolent of Collings' past crimes and vices. It was almost refreshing to breathe the better air that was wafted to him from South America. Collings was occupying a small position—the one Shannon had found him—and he did well in it; and in Bluazes, at least, there had never been a gust to blow against his name.

Collings had been put on a ship and

set asail, and Shannon stood aside now whilst the whirlwind of time blew the traces of the wandering footsteps off the desert space of the Sudan. He had made it possible for this man to escape. Sylvia Derbyshire herself had told him that his words "had sent her to Brazil." Was it not rather his own silence? Oh, there were times when he called up to mind her look upon him!

Toward August of the second year he found himself again in Dunkilly. After the horse show he went down as a week-end guest to stop with his old friends, the Northrups, in their Irish home. He arrived by an earlier train than the one by which the family expected him. There was no one to greet him, and when he came up to the terrace there were only the children there. The children, two years older and gayer, had lost nothing of their friendly love for him. Shannon sat down to early tea with Nick and Norah on the fine porch at the west of the castle, where the outlook was over the fields to the Abbey Hill. But his small hosts, with exquisitely scrupulous hospitality, made keener no doubt by some spell cast by the lady herself, begged Mr. Shannon to wait.

"Oh, Uncle Bob, *don't* pour out!" Mrs. Collings had promised solemnly to be back. She would *so* love to hear the story of the elephant stampede at Uncle Bob's city, so Uncle Bob "must *please* not begin!"

Mrs. Collings! But no doubt there were other people bearing that name.

Didn't Uncle Bob *know* she was here? Or was it one of those surprises which children are so quick to approve of and which they had now stupidly spoiled?

No, he didn't know it. But the children had spoiled nothing. Nothing.

Mrs. Collings had gone, he was told, to the Abbey Hill for sundown; she hadn't wanted "*them*" to go along, but she had "solemnly, solemnly promised to be back for tea."

Shannon rose from the little table with its jam and buttered toast and glasses of milk and little earthern pot of tea. He could not see anything that looked like a foot passenger coming in summery frock through the fields, although in the distance quite a quarter of a mile away a dark figure entered the western meadows. Mrs. Collings was in black, he was told, in black for her husband. Didn't Uncle Bob *know* that Mrs. Collings was a widow? No, he had not known it.

"I think," Shannon told them, "I think if you kiddies will go on with your tea, I will walk out and meet Mrs. Collings."

And after promising sacredly not to tell her the story of the elephant stampede on the way home, he started.

He came up with her about half way between the abbey and the castle. She wore a very thin dress of delicate black stuff and a hat with much grace in its sombre shadow, and she seemed herself like a shadow fallen across the golden harvest fields; but when she recognized the man who was coming toward her and when they had greeted each other, something lighted the melancholy of her face.

"It's very early," Shannon told her, "there's nothing more important than nursery tea on at this hour, would you —could you stroll back a little way before dark?"

They walked all the way back to the abbey, and they climbed the stairs to the ruin, and sat down as before, side by side on the sunny seat.

Shannon could so little know what was in her mind, could so little touch the history of the twenty-four months between them; and perhaps not wishing to do so or in any way to come near that other history, he gave it up.

"No one told me you were here," he said. "I came down quite by chance. I had several places in my mind for passing this week-end and I chose this——" He paused.

"You chose this by chance?"

"No, because it had associations for me, because——" He looked into the well of leaves now full of sunlight, and where his eyes had rested when he talked to her before, and then he turned to her. "No, because of this."

"Would you," she asked, "take your hat off?"

Surprised, he at once complied.

"Why?"

"Why, you took your hat off then, and I want to see you as I did on that day."

"I was horribly seedy, then, I remember," Shannon said.

"Did you get well at once?"

"Oh, yes, at once. You remember you wouldn't let me help you. You wouldn't for a long time, and how I had to persuade you that it wasn't out of pity and then——"

Mrs. Collings turned to him and said: "I had the advantage over you because I knew that you were to come here to-day."

It seemed to him then as though the trifling knowledge he had received of her during his absence were nothing, and the things he longed to know were so many that he did not know where to begin.

Then she spoke the first words that broke the long silence.

She said: "You see that I have come back just where I took things up."

Shannon bowed his head.

"I didn't know that Phil had died. I see by your dress—and the children told me, too—that you are a widow."

"Didn't you know?" she asked, surprised. "The papers were full of Phil."

"I have been coming to England for the last eight weeks," Shannon replied, "and I haven't seen anything but the most general news."

"When I got there," Mrs. Collings went on, "I found what you had done." She came abruptly to the thing uppermost in her mind.

Shannon looked at her quickly and echoed:

"What I had *done?* What do you mean?"

"I suppose," she continued, "that you really haven't an idea, at any rate you never gave me an inkling of it. I suppose, after all, you looked upon it as a humane duty which a generous heart made you do quite simply."

Her praise touched him deeply, and he did not disclaim it.

"Phil told me at once everything in full, Mr. Shannon."

"Nonsense, nonsense!" he exclaimed. "Did he tell you that I had an old score to pay up?"

"I know nothing of old scores," she said, "I only know that in order, as Phil put it, 'in order not to go back on Shannon,' he lived straight in Bluazes. He was living straight when I went there—please, Mr. Shannon, take it in, will you? Phil Collings had pulled himself together, he had done the best he knew how, because of you."

As she stopped for the moment, a certain humor in the situation struck him exquisitely.

"Yes, yes!" she was going on. "*You* saved Phil Collings. Everything that was to be done had been done, when I got to Bluazes. A new and better position was given to him after a very short time, and when he took it he said: 'Do you know, I believe I am almost fit to fill this position?' And it turned out that he was fit to fill it."

Shannon had placed his hat down on the bench between them. Mrs. Collings lifted it and placed it on her knees and clasped her thin white hands on the crown of the straw. She had been a lovely creature before, but there was a new meekness in her; she had evidently gone through a very hard school the last two years, and she was handling life in a gentler, more docile way than before.

She went on: "I had ruined Phil Collings' life. My heartless caprices, my flirtations had set him on the bad run. I knew it when you talked to me as you did here. I was angry with myself, and I was angry with you. Do you know that in the past he had really loved me very much, indeed? And I have grown to believe that perhaps a woman can do more harm to a man than she can ever do good; at any rate, when I went back to undo my work it was awfully strange and rather humiliating to find that Fate had gone straight on without me. Why, there wasn't any need of me at all, and Phil was saved!"

Shannon forcibly broke the daze into

which her presence as much as her singular point of view had thrown him, and said:

"You are more romantic even than before. You are entirely wrong. If Collings 'picked up' as you say he did—if you found that he had pulled things together before you got there—it was really because of his own character; it must have been in him, you see, for he couldn't have done it otherwise. It only proves that even the most curiously warped of us goes on really alone, by his own efforts, to good or bad." He stopped and laughed. "But for God's sake, don't try to analyze anything so simple. The only thing that strikes me in it all is that—wasn't your part of it needless? I mean to say, it was a surfeit of moral prop. Phil seems to have been perfectly able to have gotten along alone."

For a second she didn't answer. She sat very meekly and passively in the sunny corner of the seat, her slender black figure, the line of her dark hair around her white brow, and her clasped hands making so tender a picture, so womanly a picture that the man's heart grew fuller of her with every look he gave.

"Perhaps," she said, after a second. "Possibly he might have gone on to the end, and yet do you know"—and he thought her lip trembled—"I think I did help, because——" She stopped again.

Shannon waited in a sort of mental agony. She continued: "I kept you in his mind; I went on holding you up to him—well, I may say to help you with him and to help him with you."

"My poor friend," he murmured, putting his hand out impulsively.

But she did not seem to see it. She smiled very slowly, and shook her head as if to turn his pity aside. Then she turned abruptly.

"You hadn't any idea how Phil adored you. He used to make an ideal of you at school."

He could not reply.

As she spoke of Collings in a subdued voice, her lovely face bent, her hands clasped, her words had a reverence in them.

Robert Shannon, listening to her, reflected her grave attitude, but it was hard for him just then to think of Collings other than he had always known him. Shannon's feelings were acute. Over and over in his mind the thought repeated itself that his friend was dead and that the woman he adored was free. Over and over the thought repeated itself that now there was for him—perhaps—perhaps—some dim chance.

"I did not know that Phil was dead until the children told me."

She exclaimed, lifting her face: "Really, really, you didn't know? Oh, how *far* away you must have been not to have heard! It will be a sort of joy—I mean just that—to tell you then—to tell you. In the little town where we lived Phil had made himself not only respected, but very much loved. There was a confidence in him that all the people showed as though he were their friend. The president came through for the unveiling of a monument, and Phil was delegated to receive the chief. Meanwhile, there was a plot on foot to assassinate the president, and as Phil started to go up the steps with the crowd, he saw the assassin make his dreadful rush forward. In a moment Phil understood the horror and he threw himself upon the native and took the blow in his own body."

She covered her eyes with her hands.

"Don't go on," he urged gently. "Don't try to tell me about it. Poor Collings! Poor, poor old chap!"

But she turned to him vehemently, and said: "How can you say those words, 'Poor Collings?' I feel so differently about it. I think he was wonderful. It seems to me that he was more than conqueror in every way," she said deeply, "in every way. He lived just long enough that day to realize what he had done and he was so glad. He died happy. He couldn't have been so happy ever again, even if he had lived to a ripe old age."

Her companion arose and walked a little away from her to give her time.

There had been a solemnity, a tragic beauty in her story, and under its impression though he was, he was more deeply under the tender knowledge of what the speaker was to him, and of the fact that she was free now; and new as her sorrow was, Shannon could have turned to her with all his heart and told her his love, but at that moment there arose before him, with her words, a picture of the night at school.

Once again with singular distinctness the scene flashed across his mind. A blaze of glory appeared before him, and back of little Phil Collins as he sat high on the window-seat, Robert saw the red English sunset throw its crimson flags. Together the banners waved and waved and mingled deeper and deeper; the heart of the glory grew until around the boyish head the rays converged like a halo.

"What," he thought to himself, "has any of us done that Phil has not outstripped us all? So much to cover, so much to live down and live up—over."

It was as though Collings had built a tremendous monument out of all his past and climbed up on it until he, himself, touched the sun.

Mrs. Collings, too, had risen. She was standing looking down over the meadows where the harvest mellowed on the wheat; she was not thinking of South America; she had no picture of boyhood in her mind. New as her sorrow was, she was thinking of Shannon.

"You wanted me," she said, "to leave you here the last time we were here together. You refused to let me lead you down. Now, again, I am going to ask you to let me leave you here and myself go back alone to Dunkilly."

But Shannon had by this time come close to her at the beginning of the crumbling steps.

"No!" he cried. "I was obstinate before, but I am more obstinate now."

He stepped down before her one or two stairs and remained below her, his lifted face raised to her. For a second she returned his gaze very tranquilly and very intently. The sun shone on his head as he stood holding out both his hands.

But she stopped where she was, looking at him—wavering still, with more on her heart to say: "I hadn't been married a month before Phil knew I had gone out to him in pity."

It seemed that she must confess herself. She made rather a piteous gesture.

"I had nothing else to give him—nothing else. I knew it the day you and I stood here together, although I would not let myself understand it so. I knew it when he met me in Brazil. I did my best to keep it from him. Phil never spoke to me about this. Wasn't it strange? He seemed in a simple, happy way to accept the fact that I had come. *That* made it easy in a measure."

She chose her words, waited a minute, and then went on:

"Of course, he did not for a long time think——" She stopped here. "I mean, that not until the end did he ever speak to me frankly about—about——" Her cheek lost its icy pallor. *"Then,* do you know what he said to me? *Do you know?"*

Shannon replied incoherently: "I know, I know—and I would rather that you did not tell me. The only thing I want to hear is what *you* will say to me."

He still extended his hands. "Will you come? Will you come?"

She wavered still where she stood, then slowly descended through the steps between them, and when she had reached him, put both her hands on his forehead, pushed back his shining hair, and said to him, struggling with tears to find her voice:

"Ever since that day on these sunny ruins—ever since that day, my dear, my dear! Don't you think it was hard to go to Brazil? I used to feel on that long ocean journey that perhaps I was paying up for any harm I ever did Phil. That perhaps I had made good to him."

But Shannon would not let her go on. He put his arms about her and drew her to his heart.

THE WANDERERS

By Mrs. Jacques Futrelle

A GENTLEMAN stood at the edge of the curb in front of a brilliantly lighted place from which, if one paused to listen, came a cheerful clamor and the inviting tinkle of glasses. The gentleman was considerably frayed, but a gentleman nevertheless. There was a certain set to his shoulders despite their sagginess; there were fine lines in his face, but the eyes were unsteady and there were little bloated puffs beneath them. A flurry of wind, sharp and icy, found a way through his thin garments, and he shivered a little.

To his left, where the building joined another, was a signboard. On the signboard the bill of a well-known vaudeville house was weekly exploited; the thing that held the gentleman's attention was a line in glaring letters at the top: "The Musical MacAllisters." The doorway which screened the clamor and the tinkle yawned invitingly as it gave up a customer, but the gentleman only closed his teeth with a snap and turned his eyes again to the glaring letters at the top of the signboard.

It seemed a trick of Fate that his choosing of ways should be there side by side. The doorway: The path he had been following for a year, a straying from place to place, living by his wits, a soggy existence that held for its object only the indulgence of liberty. The signboard: A chance for redemption, a slim one but still a chance. The Musical MacAllisters might at least take him for a lackey in their act. He had a trick with the piano.

He stood there at the edge of the curb mentally suspended. Ever since he could remember he had bowed before a will no one dared oppose—a tyrannical will that swept all persons before it or crushed them utterly. There came a day when he dared oppose. And he had come to this in his hope of hurting, savagely hurting, the pride behind the tyranny. But his revenge had melted into thin air, the gutter had ceased to be alluring, the people with whom he came in contact in his rage disgusted him. He longed for cleanliness of body and soul, and he knew of no way to get it, unless he bowed again to the oppressor. There was just a hint of a way in the line at the top of the signboard.

"Well," he asked himself, "is it the theatre, or——"

He needed a drink. He knew that, for he had denied himself all day, and his nerves were jumping. He fingered three coins that rested in his pocket; two dimes and a nickel. He drew out the nickel.

"I'll toss for it," he decided. "Heads, theatre; tails——"

He flipped the coin. It missed his unsteady hand, clinked upon the curb and rolled into the gutter. He found it after patient searching, and examined the upturned side.

"Heads!" he exclaimed.

He settled the drooping shoulders and crossing the curb joined a long line of gallery patrons.

Next morning he sat in the reception-room of a hotel waiting for Mr. James MacAllister of The Musical MacAllisters. His fingers were working restlessly, unceasingly, and occasionally he

ran them along inside his collar. He had borrowed the collar from a bartender. He shivered, although the room was warm, and twice he moistened his lips. The soft patter of snow against the window was playing havoc with his nerves, and he moved to a chair farther away. There he sat motionless staring down with tensely closed teeth, congratulating himself that his shoes were worn out squarely under the bottom instead of at the side. It was uncomfortable on an icy pavement, but it was a great stimulant to his self-respect.

He didn't have to wait long, for Mr. MacAllister never dallied. He had been twenty years in vaudeville—way back to the days when it had been variety—and was accustomed to catching trick cues. He followed closely upon the heels of the boy who brought the message, paused in the door, and looked the gentleman over. He knew his story without any telling.

"Well, what can I do for you?" he asked briskly.

"I want——" The words stuck in the gentleman's throat, and he swallowed hard. "Do you need a musician?"

Mr. MacAllister grunted.

"What can you do?" he temporized.

He sat down, stretched out his feet, and hooked his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat. It was a wonderful waistcoat, that—lurid, and handsome with real mother-of-pearl buttons down the front. From the left pocket dangled a diamond fob which shot out little gleams in every direction. The gentleman hadn't had a square meal for a month.

"I play the piano," replied the gentleman.

"Um!"

"The mandolin, guitar, banjo," he flung in.

"Um!" mused Mr. MacAllister. "College things."

The gentleman moistened his lips.

"Yes, college things," he agreed.

"Anything else?" Mr. MacAllister asked after a moment.

"No."

"No brass?"

"No."

"Never tried to blow things, eh?" Mr. MacAllister winked, then threw his head back and laughed loudly; the gentleman only closed his hands tightly. "Don't happen to play the violin?" he inquired when the gale of laughter had subsided to a chuckle. He really wanted only to put the gentleman at his ease.

"No. I detest it. It gets on my nerves."

"Well, now!" And Mr. MacAllister removed his thumbs to snap his fingers. "I'd just like you to hear my daughter play the fiddle once, and I guess you'd change your mind. She's——"

"I heard her last night," the gentleman cut in. "At least I suppose——"

"Yep, that's her—that's Bess; I guess it was bum, eh? I guess *that* got on your nerves, eh?"

"No, it was too good," replied the gentleman slowly.

"I just guess it was." Mr. MacAllister replaced his thumbs arrogantly. "Mrs. MacAllister ain't rotten, you know, but she has to give up the calcium for that solo. Best teachers money could get in America, and we hiked over the circuit paying for it. But we are proud of it, and it always leaves them wantin' more. That's my policy—leave 'em wantin' more."

"I suppose it's a good one," the gentleman assented. He felt called upon to say something.

"You betcher neck." Mr. MacAllister settled back complacently. "End your act in a flourish with lots of brass—the more brass the better—and the hands popping like firecrackers. If they tear the roof off sling in 'Yankee Doodle' and 'Dixie' and 'Star-Spangled Banner,' than leave 'em there—wantin' more." He came down to business. "You know, as it is, we're a big hit, booked solid for three years, ain't seen the inside of an agency for nine months. Still—if you could play brass," he added meditatively.

"I'm sorry," remarked the gentleman despondently. The glittering

doorway that he had forsaken on this chance was becoming an agonizing certainty.

"I ain't got any objection to making the act a bigger hit if I can," Mr. MacAllister went on. "The managers like a lot of people, and I've made some additions, but I've always had to let 'em go because they threw me down. I've pulled a lot of 'em out of the hole, and all I got for it was my trouble." He was silent for a time. "Come in here and start the piano going. Of course you've got to show me."

The gentleman followed Mr. MacAllister through several parlors to the music-room; his loose, lank figure taking on a certain air of dignity from the luxury of his surroundings.

"Make it high class, but put in lots of fireworks," Mr. MacAllister directed.

He sent a page up-stairs for his daughter and her violin, and the gentleman went to the piano. While he was at it he'd just show him about that solo.

The gentleman ran his fingers idly over the keys, then lingeringly, lovingly; striking a minor chord occasionally, coaxing inspiration. His fingers stumbled at times, striking a false note—it's always so when one hasn't played for a long time—then he slipped into melodies, dreamy, lovable things. Bess came in and dropped silently into a seat. She blew a kiss to Mr. MacAllister and shook her head doubtfully at the musician. She remembered how the others had turned out, but Mac always was easy.

The music rippled on, sometimes breaking off abruptly where the memory failed, then beginning afresh and floating on to the end. Finally the gentleman paused and waited. The saggy figure drooped more, and the hands hung limply by his sides. Mr. MacAllister was disappointed. It was fine—too fine.

"Can't you give us something—bing? Then tinkly, ripply, a chunk of notes—bang? Right off the bat, and end up with a flourish?" He illustrated with his hands in mid-air.

The gentleman smiled faintly and his fingers fell to the keys again. When he finished Bess sighed and leaned back contentedly, but Mr. MacAllister leaned forward with his mouth open.

"By George!" he said at last. "By George!"

In his mind's eye he was switching the MacAllister act all around, and he could see a grand piano right in the middle of it. A piano had no business in the MacAllister act, but when one could play like that!

"We won't have the violin, Bess," he said. "I'm going to the theatre. Here's an addition to the MacAllisters."

He jerked his finger toward the gentleman. Bess nodded to him frankly, and held out her hand. He wasn't like the others, except he was frayed. Then she went to tell Mrs. MacAllister.

"Another tramp?" she asked.

Bess nodded.

"But, Dodo, he—he's a gentleman," she added.

"Worse kind when they come out of the gutter," commented Mrs. MacAllister. "It only proves that they've fallen farther. Been drinking?"

Bess nodded again.

"Mac's a fool," Mrs. MacAllister declared hotly. "We don't need anybody."

"I'd do it if I were Mac," Bess ventured. "That is, with this one. Of course I don't know his story—it's the usual one, I guess—but there's something—different about him."

Mrs. MacAllister stared at her.

"Really?" she drawled. "Well, you're not to have anything to say to him, understand? He's to be kept in his place."

"But the rehearsals?" Bess asked.

"There's a way of condescending at a rehearsal," Mrs. MacAllister answered.

Meanwhile down-stairs Mac had put it clearly to the gentleman.

"I'm going to make you a proposition," he said. "I'll buy you a whole outfit, pay your expenses—and we stop at good hotels, I tell you—and give you five dollars a week until Christmas. After that we'll *talk!* I expect you to learn the things we play. Some things

we can fake. Bess will like your playing the accompaniment to her solo. She's always been peevish about the orchestra. How about it?"

"I'm—I thank you," said the gentleman. He choked a little over the words.

"And now——" Mr. MacAllister put a kindly hand on his shoulder—"no boozing. I know your trouble. I don't care who you are or where you came from, but if you work for me cut it out!"

"I'll try."

Mr. MacAllister's hand met the gentleman's in a friendly grasp.

"That's right," he said. "Now, what's your name?"

The slightest trace of a twinkle came into the gentleman's eyes.

"MacAllister," he replied.

"Now, that's neat," commented Mr. MacAllister, with a chuckle. "First name?"

"John."

"Well, Jack, before I go to the theatre I'm going to look at some new suits and overcoats I've had my eye on all week. Like to come along?"

II.

The gentleman sat in a solitary corner of the dining-room in a New Haven hotel, eating a solitary breakfast. For four weeks Mrs. MacAllister had managed to keep him in a solitary corner. True, at the first he had selected it, intending to emerge later when he felt he could look the world, and Mr. MacAllister, squarely in the face, but Mrs. MacAllister had made up her mind to keep him in the corner, and there he sat rather contemptuously amused, but still he sat there. They had changed towns three times, but there is always a solitary corner to every dining-room, and Mrs. MacAllister frankly did not like him.

"Now, see here," said Mac bluntly when he had gone out, "he's a MacAllister, and I'm tired of seeing him dangling around on the outside. He comes to dinner with us."

"Then I don't," replied Mrs. MacAllister. "I'll have my dinner sent up."

"Very well, your dinner will be sent up."

"And breakfast, too."

"Ditto breakfast."

"Oh, don't be foolish, Jim. I don't like him and I don't want him dragged in."

"Why don't you like him?"

Mrs. MacAllister ignored the question.

"He's keeping straight," Mac added.

"Oh, I can't explain to you," she replied. "You wouldn't understand."

"I wouldn't? Well, it's because it's some fool woman's reason," he said flatly.

"Oh, perhaps," she agreed. "But four weeks ago you pulled him out of the gutter, and now he has the air of a prince."

"Fine!" said Mac. He was proud of him.

"I knew you wouldn't understand," she said quickly.

Mac winked broadly at Bess and she lowered her eyes to her plate.

"Do you object to Jack being a gentleman?" he asked his wife.

"Oh, that word makes me frantic," she exclaimed, "and I don't call his cool insolence the manners of a gentleman." Mac slapped at his paper impatiently. "He hasn't finished eating humble pie yet, Jim, but when he throws back those drooping shoulders a little more, and pokes his chin higher he'll make a door-mat of you if you give him a chance. And he's not a MacAllister. I think he was pretty cheeky to say so."

Mac looked at her exasperated.

"Lord," he said, "you can't expect a woman to take a joke." Then he grinned at her. "How do you know his name ain't MacAllister?"

She drummed on the table with her well-kept fingers.

"I'm not a fool, Jim—Oh, you said yourself it was a joke. And another thing, I don't want any complications." She glanced at Bess significantly.

Mac looked at her in amazement.

"Now, I'm not so foolish," she went on. "I'm not taking any chances." She

pushed her chair back and arose. "Do we play those ridiculous college things the rest of the week?"

"We do."

"Who's running this act now—you or the tramp?"

"I don't do things unless I want to."

"Well I don't rehearse any more. I'm going to shop, and I'm going to take Bess with me."

Mac hooked his thumbs in the armholes of that waistcoat.

"Bess is going to rehearse," he said in a tone of finality. "We ain't going to make a mess of the best act in vaudeville.

She was undecided for a while.

"Well, you're the boss," she said finally. "I'm going to shop."

"Better wait for New York," Bess suggested.

Mrs. MacAllister smiled at her, then swept majestically out. Mac slapped the crumbs from that waistcoat.

"I hate to cross your mother," he said to Bess, "but she's unreasonable. She's got some fool notion." He scratched his head reflectively. "I like him. Don't you?"

"He hasn't given me the chance," Bess smiled.

"Well, just you be nice to him, girlie." Mac patted her hand. "He's keeping straight, and I think the trouble is he's lonesome."

When Bess entered the stage door of the darkened theatre half an hour later she saw dimly the saggy figure at the piano. But the attitude was not one of dejection now, it was one of interest. He was playing the dreamy lovable things he had played that first day. She lingered in the shadow and listened. After a time she crept softly forward and stood in the bend of the piano. He removed his hat and let his right hand hang by his side holding it.

"Why, you're doing all that with your left hand!" Bess whispered in amazement.

He nodded, and when he finished the melody answered her.

"I can't play that way and talk, too," he said. "I'd almost forgotten the knack of it. Does it sound straggly?"

"Why, it's marvelous," she replied. "I can't quite believe it. I listened a while before I came over and do you know you almost made me cry?"

He dropped his hand upon the keys—the left hand—and played "Twickenham Ferry."

"How's that?" he asked.

She smiled. Somehow she couldn't think of anything to say.

"Did you ever hear Patti sing this?" he asked. He played "Edinboro Town," and then he struck some chords. Bess was amazed at their richness and fullness. He was playing the "Dead March from Saul." She put out her hand impulsively across the piano.

"Do you know what such a gift means to you?" she asked breathlessly. "How's this for a line: "Greatest Musical Marvel of the Age! The Left-Handed Pianist!' Why, you could wear a glove on your right hand, and——"

"That's cheap," he broke in curtly.

Bess drew back and flushed; he tried to stammer an apology.

"The tricks of the trade," she said coldly. "Vaudeville isn't art—it's claptrap. You've got to do things with a flourish, and leave 'em wantin' more."

She turned away toward a xylophone; she was afraid she was going to cry, after all. The gentleman sat at the piano clasping and unclasping his hands spasmodically. Finally he strode over to her.

"I'm sorry," he said. "I——"

But just then Mac came in.

When the rehearsal was over Bess ran up to her dressing-room where she leaned against the door and let two tears roll down her cheeks. She did not understand the tumult of emotion and the undercurrent of antagonism the gentleman had aroused. Finally, when she felt certain he had gone, she came down—and found him waiting.

"I want you to forgive me," he said, "but I don't deserve it."

"I don't think I understand you," she replied.

"I don't understand myself sometimes. Little devils get hold of my tongue and make me say things I don't intend."

"You're rather—bitter, aren't you?"

After a long while he nodded.

"I'm sure you're too young to be pessimistic," she went on. "Are you lonesome?"

"Awfully."

And she concluded he had the most wonderful smile she had ever seen.

III.

It was Christmas week when the MacAllisters came into Boston; and here the gentleman began to show signs of being human. Usually he did not notice the name of the place—he merely traveled. The everlasting string of stations, hotels, and theatres was all the same to him. But unconsciously he melted at Back Bay, and his manner from that time held to Bess a hint of excitement. Mac did not notice the change, and Mrs. MacAllister's sharp eyes were temporarily closed with a headache, so Bess alone dipped into the gentleman's secret.

At the hotel Mrs. MacAllister went to her room to nurse the headache which gave Mac a chance to ask the gentleman to join them at dinner. He himself had long ago settled the question of being dragged in. Bess found him already in the dining-room when she come down, gazing absently at a holly wreath which swung in the window near him.

"We've always sat over there before," Bess said to him, indicating a table farther along.

"I always——" He stopped and stared at her. "I like this place by the window," he replied. "Do you mind?"

They waited for Mac silently for a while. The gentleman now was staring through the window with unseeing eyes.

"Know Boston?" Bess asked finally.

"It—it was once home," he replied.

She thrilled at the word, at the tone, and waited. She had made a point of never questioning him.

"How wonderful it is to have a recollection of home for Christmas," she said.

The long, lean fingers that lay upon the table were trembling, and he closed his teeth with a snap.

"It isn't home now," he said fiercely. "I have no home."

"No one in our business has," she remarked presently. "We are just wanderers on the face of the earth."

"It's happiness for me," he replied. "I've had more real peace since I've been a MacAllister than I've ever known."

"I don't mean to complain," Bess explained quickly. "I don't suppose I'd be happy doing anything else, and I don't think about it much except at Christmas time. Then I get homesick for a home, for all the little things that make home; the cooking, the sewing, the keeping house, the having a Christmas tree and Christmas dinner—with company!" She sighed. "I suppose it's because I've never had them."

He was looking through the window again with unseeing eyes. Suddenly he leaned toward her.

"Will you come with me in the morning?" he asked eagerly. "There's a place I want to go, and I want you to go with me. It's a pilgrimage."

Her heart-beat quickened, but she met his eyes steadily.

"Dodo wants to buy me some new furs," she replied, "but I don't think she will be up early after her headache."

And so next morning they made the pilgrimage together. It was prosaic enough—a car ride to Harvard; but once there, under the old elms, with the frosty air nipping their faces, a blaze of enthusiasm was born in the gentleman's eyes, enthusiasm and recollection, and more than that. Neither spoke until they came to a bench and sat down.

"Isn't it beautiful?" he asked at last.

She nodded.

"Do you think I'm foolish?"

"I only wish I had such a memory to cling to," she replied.

"I suppose if I were a woman I'd cry."

"Yes."

They fell to watching the squirrels that came scurrying across the snow

looking for nuts. Bess regarded a more venturesome one with moist eyes. So here was the real man unfolding at last!

"And you're Harvard, then? I thought at first it was Yale."

"How did you know it was either?" he asked.

"Oh, easily. You knew Yale, and I watched you look at those students in New Haven. You loved them, every one of them, because they were college boys."

"Love Yale!" he mused, and laughed outright.

She laughed, too.

"Your college days haven't been over long, have they?" she asked.

"Not very long."

"We knew from the first you were an amateur. You're really not one of us at all."

"I'm going to be."

"You won't stick." She tried to meet his eyes, and waited until he looked up. "Will you?" she added.

"Yes, I'm going to stick," he said firmly. "I'm going to stick—for a year at least, and then——" He looked at her suddenly. "Did you ever think of doing concert work?"

"No, I never have." She was regarding him with a question in her eyes.

"It means a great deal more than this—this sort of thing," he said slowly. "And with your wonderful gift there's no reason why——"

"I should love it," she interrupted, "but—but——" Then, suddenly: "I suppose you know I'm not really a MacAllister?"

"Yes, I know."

"They took me when I was quite a little girl, when my mother was dying, and they have sacrificed a great deal for me. They've spent thousands on my education and my music; they've given me chances they never had. I don't think my own parents could have done more. So you see! Dodo——" She stopped. "Did you play football?"

"Yes."

The snow began falling in whirls, and the wind pelted their faces with the white flakes. They arose and turned toward Massachusetts Avenue, with a trio of begging squirrels in their train, and half a dozen mendicant pigeons fluttering above their heads. Near the gate he paused and looked back longingly. Holly wreaths grinned at him from dormitory windows, and crimson pillows were piled cosily beneath them.

"Do you see the two windows there in the end?" he asked, and he indicated a building near by. "That room was mine for four years when I—— There comes a car," he broke off hurriedly.

The ride back to Boston was a silent one. The snowstorm had grown into a blizzard by the time they reached the river, and the Common was an undulating field of white as they emerged from the subway. A splendid counterpart of Santa Claus was pushing forward in the teeth of the storm, followed by a crowd of shrieking, delighted small boys. They stood for a minute looking on.

"Santa Claus forgets the wanderers," Bess remarked wistfully. "What a pity!"

They were just about to brave the tumult of Tremont Street when a carriage, a sumptuous affair, low and roomy, with its living appurtenances erect and wooden, stopped beside the curb. The door opened and a woman emerged. Bess caught a glimpse of a beautiful sensitive face between a brown-plumed hat, and the upturned collar of a fur coat; then she saw the eyes open wide in amazement as they came to rest upon the gentleman. Some strange fleeting expression crossed his face, and he turned away quickly. The woman came directly to him.

"Why, Jack!" she exclaimed. "You, at last! Where have you been? Dear, I——"

She grasped his sleeve as he tried to move on. He looked at her coldly, impersonally.

"I beg your pardon," he said.

He raised his hat, and the next instant he had taken Bess' arm and they were mingling in the crush of Christmas shoppers. Neither he nor Bess spoke as they made their way into the hotel. They went up to her floor, still

silent. He spoke suddenly as she reached out to open her door.

"I suppose I owe you an explanation?"

"No," she replied. "Why should you explain to me?"

He stared at her and she waited tensely, her heart suffocating, her ears and throat tight. He closed his eyes once and set his teeth hard.

"Why should I?" he asked finally, and stalked off down the hall.

Bess found Mrs. MacAllister with her hat on.

"Where have you been?" she demanded.

"I've been for—I've been to Harvard," Bess replied. "I didn't think you'd be up, and—and Mac said I might."

Mac looked over his paper.

"That's right," he assented.

"With the tramp?" asked Mrs. MacAllister.

"Yes."

Bess dropped wearily into a chair, and Mrs. MacAllister crossed to the window where she drummed idly upon the pane.

"Mac, I won't have him putting nonsense into the child's head."

"That's absurd, Dodo," Bess exclaimed. "He hasn't tried."

"Why did you go out to Harvard?"

Bess looked helplessly at the back of the newspaper and tried to frame a reason.

"You can't tell me," persisted Mrs. MacAllister, "or you won't. And it will lead——" She broke off impatiently. "Bess, you know your mother's story? A poor little actress, and a great big millionaire! It was like trying to bring opposite sides of the world together. After the glamour passed he felt that he had disgraced himself; he left her—deserted her. Perhaps he *forgot* to provide for her; she never asked. You came. She drifted and she actually died of neglect."

"I don't see the connection," Bess said defensively.

"I've tried to make it plain." Her tone hardened. "The poor little actress and the great big millionaire!"

"Oh, you're inconsistent, Dodo. You called him a tramp."

"Carrie!" warned Mac. "What's the use?"

"You have eyes, Bess, and common sense. You've heard every word he has said for months about the Mona Lisa, and the Apollo Belvedere, and the little balconies in Spain. Oh, it was casual, quite casual, but I've pieced his luxurious story together. He studied in Berlin—he let that slip—and now—there's Harvard! I don't know how he came to the gutter, but some day, now that he has reformed, he'll go back to his life after he has spoiled yours."

Bess drew in her breath sharply.

"I'm merely trying to appeal to your common sense," Mrs. MacAllister said earnestly. "He'll never try to pull you up when he goes back to his life."

"He doesn't care for me that—that way," Bess denied hotly.

"He never smiles except for you!"

"Carrie!" Mac expostulated.

"I wish he did care," Bess put in defiantly. "I wish he *did care!*"

"Oh! See? I was afraid. But it isn't too late yet. You shan't be used and tossed aside, and started on the downward path as your mother was before——"

"Don't you dare say one word against my mother," Bess blazed suddenly. "Don't—don't you dare! You may say anything you like about me, about him, but not *that* about my mother. She was a good woman or she wouldn't have starved to death."

"She was a good woman until she had her child to protect," said Mrs. MacAllister coldly.

Bess came to her feet with a little cry.

"I won't let you say that," she said fiercely. "I won't! I won't! I won't! Mac, don't let her say it! I won't listen! You sha'n't say it! I won't listen!"

"It's a moral—the poor little actress and the great big millionaire."

"It isn't so, what you say about her!"

"It is so!"

"I hate you—I hate you!" Bess whispered tensely.

She turned toward the door, one hand upraised hysterically, the suffocating feeling again at her heart, her throat, her ears. She leaned there a moment sobbing, then went out and slammed the door.

Two tears rolled down Mrs. MacAllister's velvet cheeks.

"Now, isn't this a mess?" she moaned.

"Well, you've made it," Mac replied tartly.

"Naturally!" Her lips curled sarcastically. "Well, he leaves! You only agreed to keep him until Christmas. It's Christmas."

"He doesn't leave," Mac declared. "The public's got to have him; the managers have got to have him—well, *I've* got to have him. It's Christmas—we *talk!* He gets two hundred a week from now on."

"Two hundred!" Mrs. MacAllister gasped. "I knew he'd make a doormat of you, Jim MacAllister. Lord, what is there about the man that dominates, dominates? Oh!" She paced the floor with hands clasped, then she paused and stared at Mac. "You're not deliberately going to offer him two hundred a week?"

"I'm getting it for him, extra you understand. He's worth more. I've been getting it for two months. I owe it to him."

"And what does he owe you?" she snapped.

"Common decency, that's all," he replied. "And he has handed me out a faith in my own kind that's worth a whole lot."

"Piffles!" she exclaimed. "We didn't need him to begin with."

He threw aside his paper, picked up his hat, and turned to shake a finger at her.

"Carrie," he said, "you make me sick."

And he, too, went out and slammed the door.

IV.

Mac paced the corridor in front of his dressing-room that night, and anxiously watched the clock. The gentleman had not come in. No one had seen him since the afternoon performance. A carriage had been waiting for him then, a sumptuous affair, low and roomy, with its living appurtenances erect and wooden. But he had ignored it, although the coachman entreated. The stage doorkeeper had noted the impertinence.

The acrobats came off, and while a comedian amused the audience before a drop the stage hands began setting for The Musical MacAllisters. Mac threw an ulster over his huzzar's costume, and rushed to the hotel. His search was fruitless. He reached the theatre again in time to have the piano hauled off, and the music for Bess' solo given to the orchestra.

"I'm afraid," he said sadly to Bess as they stood waiting in the wings, "and I am sorry. He was keeping straight and——"

The buzz sounded. The next instant The Musical MacAllisters were smilingly bowing before a storm of applause.

They got through the act by bringing it back to what it had been before the gentleman joined them, but it was not the same. Bess felt it, Mac felt it. Mrs. MacAllister gave no sign that anything was changed. The audience never knew the difference except to wonder at the line on the programme: "The Musical Marvel of the Age. The Left-handed Pianist."

Mac was too impatient to force calls. He didn't take what was legitimately theirs, but plunged into his dressing-room and began scrubbing off his make-up.

"I think it's bad policy not taking the calls," suggested Mrs. MacAllister.

He merely climbed out of the costume.

"I can't understand about Jack," he said finally. "I only hope——" He broke off with a shake of his head.

"I suppose," Mrs. MacAllister replied carelessly, "he took his notice sooner than it was intended."

"His notice?" Mac demanded. "What notice? Did you give him a notice?"

"Yes."

"It ain't worth nothing. He's got to have a notice from *me!*"

She shrugged her shoulders.

He finished dressing silently and rapidly. But before he left the theatre he had to face an angry manager who insisted upon having the left-handed pianist.

"I'll get him," replied Mac. "I'm going to find him now."

"You bet you'll find him, or your act closes."

"Now, see here," Mac said suddenly, "we give you a good act before I ever seen him. We can do it again. They ain't never failed to tear the roof off wantin' more from the MacAllisters."

"You heard what I said," snapped the manager. "You produce your piano player, or you are canceled."

"I'll produce him!"

Mac went out, and for the first time in his life he was passionately angry. He had a long search, and finally came upon the gentleman in the hotel corridor going toward the bar. He planted himself in front of him.

"Here, no more of that!" he said abruptly. "You go up-stairs!"

It was the wrong way, and he knew it. The gentleman could not be forced, even when he was sober; now he backed against the wall and glared at Mac with sullen, bloodshot eyes.

"You go up-stairs," Mac repeated fiercely.

He caught the gentleman's arm with steel fingers. The sullen, bloodshot eyes glittered, and a long lean hand sought Mac's throat. But at that moment Bess pulled at the gentleman's sleeve, and both men were aware of a white, distressed face upturned to them.

"Go up-stairs with Mac," she whispered. "Please!"

The gentleman relaxed, and allowed himself to be led away. When Bess was in her room she unfolded a note she held crushed in her hand. It had been left with a page before the afternoon performance; the page had forgotten it. It was unsigned, but she knew the writing. Across a torn piece of paper was written in pencil:

I do owe you an explanation because I love you. The girl in brown was my cousin.

She flung herself upon the bed and burst into tears.

Mac called a rehearsal for the following morning, and while he strode impatiently up and down the stage, waiting for the orchestra, Bess and the gentleman sat at a little table in one of the reception-rooms of the hotel. She had sent him a note asking him to be there.

He sat with his arms folded upon the table, looking with unseeing eyes through the window. She tried to add something casual to her good morning; she had framed a dozen things to keep the situation from being strained, and she could remember none of them when she saw him.

"Mac has a rehearsal," she said at last tritely.

"I'm going to play this week," he replied. "I sent him word."

"Only this week?" she asked. "Mac didn't send you away?"

"No. But he will now—after last night." He met her eyes fairly. "I can't tell you how sorry I am. I've tried to frame apologies——" He broke off and looked through the window again.

"I know," Bess said quickly, "so let's forget."

They were both silent for a while.

"I'm hopeless, don't you think?" he asked finally.

"No, of course not. One little stumble?" She came close, and put out her hand friendlily. "Something troubles you that we don't understand. You want to go to your home, don't you?"

"No."

"Our life doesn't satisfy you. It's cheap and tawdry?"

"No." His hand closed over hers suddenly. "It's you I'm thinking of, and last night," he said. "I'm disappointed in myself."

She wanted to look at him courageously, but her gaze persisted in following the inlaid line at the edge of the table, while her hand trembled under his clasp.

"So you care for me?" she whispered.

For answer he held the hand closer. She was quite still for a long time.

"I've tried not to tell you." He crushed the fingers cruelly. "Until you could respect me, and now——"

"I do respect you. Oh, I've seen the struggle, and you must not think too badly of yourself. You're going to try again, then——" She stopped and tried to meet his eyes steadily.

"Then?" he questioned.

Her lips trembled when she tried to answer.

"If you care for me it will give me courage. Do you?" he asked.

She nodded, and after a long while a tear-drop trickled down her cheek.

"Oh, my dear little girl!" he exclaimed. "I'm not worth your tears. I'm going away after this week, and I may not see you again for a long time, perhaps not before another Christmas, but if you say I may come back I will. When I have something to offer, when I'm the best in my line."

She tried to smile, but it made the tears come faster. He patted her hand and brushed away the tears.

"If I could be sure you are really content with our life," she said, "that you will never regret—me!"

"I'm sure," he replied earnestly. "I know what I want; I've always known what I wanted and I've stuck to it. It made me what I was when you first saw me. It might have meant ruin except for you."

"And there isn't anybody else?"

"There isn't anybody else," he said softly. "There never has been. *She* doesn't count the way you think, and there's nothing wrong, nothing but my rebellion and my foolish dissipation. It hurt others, but it hurt me more."

Then he smiled at her, the most wonderful smile she had ever seen, and she smiled back through the tears. It was a pact.

"I love you," he whispered softly. "I love you, I love you!"

Bess went to the theatre, but the gentleman went up to his room. He drew a picture from his pocket, a well-worn little picture of Bess with her violin under her chin, and sat for a long time looking at it. At the bottom of the picture was a printed line: "The Musical MacAllisters." He saw everything quite clearly; he was giving up everything for her. And he did it without one regret.

An hour later a card was brought to him. He glanced at it, tore it in two and let the pieces flutter to the floor.

"What shall I tell him, sir?" asked the boy.

"Tell him to go to hell!" the gentleman responded curtly.

Another card came with a line written underneath the name:

You must come home.

It followed the first. Then he locked the door, put the key in his pocket, and sat by the window waiting; folding and unfolding the end of a red ribbon on the holly wreath that swung in the window. Bess had had it placed there to make it seem like Christmas.

He knew the knock when it came, loudly, imperiously, a knock no one but himself dared defy. It was quite familiar, although he hadn't heard it for more than a year. He did not move, but a smile grew and lingered long after the sound of angry footsteps had died away down the corridor.

FORGIVENESS

OFT with the statement we are met—
"I can forgive but not forget."
If man forgive, remembering,
The bee he kills but not the sting!

LEE FAIRCHILD.

THE LAW



MR. FERRIS was not in, and the boy who conveyed this information had all the usual uncertainty and unconcern as to when Mr. Ferris would be in. Beth hesitated a moment, then said: "Thank you!" and hung up the receiver. Experience had taught her the futility of entrusting a message to that colossally uninterested boy, and even if he should remember to ask Mr. Ferris to call her by phone, how could she say where she might be at any time between now and six-thirty? So she bought a sheet of paper and an envelope from the druggist's clerk, took out her fountain pen, and wrote a brief note:

> I have to be at the Settlement to-night from seven till nine. Can't you come there and go home with me? BETH.

Evidently no lengthy explanations were necessary with Mr. Ferris. Beth looked at the druggist's clerk, made a quick mental calculation, and bought a special-delivery stamp, thereby arousing the almost respectful attention of the clerk who dealt sparingly in such luxuries.

Mr. Ferris would have been glad and sad if he could have read Beth's mind as she dropped her letter in the box on the corner. He would have liked her happy assurance that he would come if he could, he would have raged at the way she took him for granted, and at the fact that even while she was dropping the letter in the box she was intent not upon the letter but upon where she should go first. So many things pressed upon this busy young person.

When Beth was thinking very hard she had a funny little way of half closing her eyes in a squint that gave her face a strangely puzzled expression. She looked this way now as she hurried along Milwaukee Avenue; but it wasn't Mr. Ferris that made her squint.

She was squinting so hard that she almost passed without seeing her, no less an object of her constant solicitude than Katy Kawawa. There were times when Katy would have been only too pleased to escape the attention of the "p'leece lady," as the neighborhood called Beth Tully, juvenile probation officer of the district. But to-day Katy's virtue had risen in the usual way—by the lowering of somebody's else, and she was anxious to make the most of her double opportunity as the bringer of news and the avenger of an injury.

"Oh!" shouted Katy, making a dive for the preoccupied "p'leece lady" and hanging on her arm with a smug familiarity. "I was jus' lookin' for you!"

"What's the matter?" Beth asked quickly, roused in an instant from her intentness on some other problem. She knew from Katy's manner that she was about to report some one else overtaken in a fault, and she could have shaken the small Pharisee for her relish of the opportunity.

Katy took no warning from Beth's voice or from her contemptuous look; she was dramatic, and she was deter-

mined to have her scene. A look of horror overspread her wizened little face, and she tugged at Beth's arm to make her bend to listen.

"Wanda's by the Greek!" she whispered.

Beth stopped, shook the grimy hand from its too familiar clutch on her arm, and faced the informer, looking her through and through with the searching, pale-blue eyes that made the "p'leece lady" a terror to evildoers.

"How do you know?" she said.

Her sharp, commanding tone made Katy shiver.

"I seen her goin' in," she whispered. "I was passin' by an' I seen her goin' in."

"You seen her goin' in!" mimicked Beth. "You're sure you didn't go in with her?"

"No'm—honest—t'God!"

Katy would have continued her protestations, but Beth silenced her with a gesture.

"Never mind," she said impatiently.

She was hurrying in the direction of the Greek's as she talked, and thinking—thinking. Even as she sped—her nervous steps were too quick for a walk, too short for a run—she was trying to remember where the nearest telephone booth was, trying to decide how far to trust Katy, trying to see a bluecoat on the avenue.

When she came to a store with a public phone she darted in, admonishing Katy as she went:

"Wait for me; I'm going to telephone."

Inside the glass booth she called for West Chicago Avenue police station.

"I want an officer right away," she told the desk sergeant, "a plain-clothes man if there's one in. Glorkas, if he's there—if not anybody you can send in a hurry—to Peter Demapopulos' fruit store." She gave directions. "No! No wagon—just a man—quietly but quick!

"Come on," she commanded Katy, and the puzzled squint deepened on the "p'leece lady's" anxious young face as she went, for she was frightened, though she never hesitated.

She had wanted a case against this Greek for almost as long as he had been in the neighborhood, but every time she traced trouble to his store her witnesses suddenly failed her. She would be her own witness this time!

The Greek knew her enmity, knew she had warned her girls against him. He would not receive her invasion peaceably, and Greek war was no mere war of words, she was well aware. But the resolution of the quick steps never faltered.

Peter's store was small and dingy; he was but newly advanced from basket-peddling to shopkeeping, and had perhaps five frugal years between him and the gaudy corner store he intended to own some day. But even now his stock showed some of that genius of display wherewith the Greek seems always able to invest his colorful commodities; when he should conquer his all but unconquerable economy and begin to afford himself more illumination, even this shabby little store would be attractive.

In the front store as Beth entered a boy was buying cocoanut taffy. Peter was not visible; the Greek who was in charge called himself Peter's brother —Peter said he wasn't. Beth was familiar with this disputed relationship and indifferent to the truth about it.

"Where's Peter?" she asked when the customer was gone.

"Downtown!" said "brother" so promptly that Beth knew he lied. Her lip curled contemptuously and her pale-blue eyes blazed with accusation; she walked straight past brother toward the curtained-off parlor at the rear.

"Hey, no!" yelled brother, when he divined her intent. "No ice cream!"

This time she did not even deign him a look, but it took no great understanding to read the purpose in those quick, unhesitating steps.

Brother ran. Not after Beth, but out the front door and away, onto a Milwaukee Avenue car and downtown, congratulating himself as he ran that Peter's uncertain temper had driven him to keeping his cap in his pocket.

Beth heard his exit without turning her head; she heard, too, Katy's exclamation as brother brushed by her in his flight, so she knew Katy was still "on the job."

"It won't do you a bit of good to run," she told Peter, "because we'd get you anyway. And it wouldn't be safe for you to harm me—you know that."

Peter did know it, though his fury was great and though the voice of the little "p'leece lady" shook with something besides anger as she delivered her defiance.

So when Glorkas arrived, ten minutes later, he found Beth standing guard over her sullen culprit, and Peter leering at the "p'leece lady" in half-hearted bravado and cursing at brother in whole-hearted anger. It was early Saturday afternoon, and the best trade of the week, except Sunday, was imminent. Peter would have to lock the store and miss the trade, while he went to the police station and waited for a bondsman.

He showed some familiarity with police methods, for he ventured on a temporizing bluff by asking Glorkas, with a showing of teeth that might have been either an ingratiating smile or an intimidating snarl: "Gotta pape?"

"No, I ain't got no 'pape,'" mocked Glorkas, "but I'll get one all right, and you better not git up no fuss wid me about a pape. We been watchin' you an' wantin' you some time, but we couldn' git no witnesses. Now we got Miss Tully's own word, an' I guess that goes some wid de Gran' Jury. Better come over an' cinch de warrant," he finished, addressing Beth, who nodded acquiescence.

She charged Katy with silence, knowing she would not keep it, and sent her home. Peter locked up, under Glorkas' supervision, and they started walking in separate pairs to avoid attention. Beth was grimly silent, and Wanda's sullenness finally broke down under her greater apprehensiveness.

"Do I git locked up?" she whimpered as they neared the station.

Beth delayed answer for a moment. Then, "I don't know," she said slowly. "I think I'll have you taken to the juvenile court and see if I can't get you sent out to the Good Shepherds."

Wanda began to cry, not softly but with loud lamentations that caused passersby to look angrily at the little "p'leece lady," whose outer calm showed nothing of her inner quaking, any more than her surface scorn showed aught of the horror and protest that was burning in her soul.

Too wise to tell Wanda to stop crying, Beth seemed wrapped in her own meditations which, however, she voiced quite audibly.

"Lot of good it did for me to shut Katy Kawawa's mouth!" she muttered. "Wanda's bound everybody on Milwaukee Avenue shall know she's being arrested."

Wanda stopped crying so suddenly that Beth was almost startled.

"I ain't goin' there no more," she began craftily.

Beth wheeled around and faced her.

"More?" she echoed. *"More?"*

Then it came over her in a sickening wave of realization, how little Wanda felt of the outrage that was clenching Beth's own hands till the nails cut her flesh and pounding against her temples until they threatened to burst. Wanda would never feel it—nobody belonging to Wanda would ever feel it. Their only morals were morals of expediency. Why bother to prefer charges against the Greek? For five dollars he could, and doubtless would, buy the whole Probovitch family to swear that Wanda had never been to his store. For a dish of adulterated ice cream he could entice Wanda back there.

The poor young "uplifter," as Hart Ferris teasingly called her, was very low in her mind as she left the station with her charge. On the homeward way Wanda began to murmur fine promises with a view to softening the manner of Beth's announcement. If the latter were too severely made, a beating might intervene before the

parental ire transferred itself from Wanda's injudiciousness to the "p'leece lady's" interferingness.

But Beth was not to be won by promises.

"You!" she retorted. "Promising! You who made me such fine promises to help Joe be good. Have you forgotten how you cried in court the day Joe was sent up? And how you told me that when he got out of the beanhouse you were going to do everything you could to keep him away from bad boys?"

"Ma's sick," said Wanda's next-younger sister when Beth asked for Mrs. Probovitch.

Beth had her own suspicions of the sickness, and stepped to the bedroom door. Mrs. Probovitch was sodden drunk. The filth of everything in the house revolted even Beth, fairly hardened to dirt by this time.

On the threshold as she was coming away, poor little Beth's surface steadiness deserted her. "Pharisee! Pharisee!" her accusing conscience cried. And she startled Wanda by bursting into tears.

II.

"You look tired to death!"

There was accusation as well as tender concern in Hart Ferris' voice, and for a moment Beth was pathetically undecided whether to deny the charge or to take full womanly advantage of the pity. Then, considering the time and the place and the probability of more paroled boys coming to report in the midst of Hart's consolation, she ignored his sympathy and took up his challenge.

"I'm not!" she declared mendaciously.

It was nine o'clock. She had dined at the Settlement, and since seven she had been at her post by the big table in the main hall, receiving the obligatory visits of nearly fifty boys paroled to her. Many of them had been to what they called "de beanhouse," meaning the John Worthy School for delinquent boys, some had been arrested —for breaking windows, for petty thefts, for giving false alarms of fire, and for like "crimes"—but after being admonished by the juvenile court judge were paroled, on their promise to "be good," to the "p'leece lady" of their district. Her visits to their homes, in the effort to find out how they were getting on, were usually unsatisfactory. If the mother spoke any English at all, she had a limited vocabulary. The boy was never there; either he was "workin'" or he was "to school" or he was just "out"—far be it from his mother to know where. But on alternate Saturday nights when the boys reported to Beth at the Settlement, she was able to gather, not in confession, but in gossip, a good deal of information about her charges.

There was Johnny Mishtawa, for instance, struggling—not too hard—with a gypsy spirit which loved any chance shelter better than a home and any game of chance better than the best steady income that ever drove a body wild with its dead certainty. Johnny sold papers, nominally, and kept two very bright black eyes wide open for better business. In order to insure his return home nights and his fair division of spoils with his "mudder," Beth had devised a scheme whereby Mrs. Mishtawa was to put down on paper each night the sum that Johnny took her, and to make opposite to it a mark, X, signifying that Johnny had slept at home. Once in two weeks this paper was presented to Beth's scrutiny.

"Forty-seven cents," she would read aloud from the paper bearing what Johnny called "me mudder's signature," "fifty-three cents, nineteen cents —how's that, Johnny?"

"Bad day," Johnny would say promptly, "got stuck."

Beth knew that if Johnny ever "got stuck" with papers it was because he was trying another "line" unsuccessfully. Evidently his "mudder" had protested, too, because the next day the record was sixty-one cents.

Then: "Dollar-nineteen! How's that, Johnny?"

"Fine day!" answered Johnny, smiling engagingly. "Work very hard."

Beth knew he had never earned a dollar-nineteen selling papers; and that if he had given his "mudder" so much, it was gambler generosity arguing a much larger sum retained. But she kept her own counsel, feeling sure that some of the other boys would throw light on the dark places of Johnny's history. Sure enough! Abraham Karnowski had failed to take home any wages on a certain pay day. His pa had beat him and his ma had sent word "by de p'leece lady." Abe hastened to exonerate himself by pleading the temptation, nay, the forcible insistence of certain bad boys that he "shoot craps." What boys? Well, August Ankowitzer and Tony Kapusta, and Johnny Mishtawa!

Next time a suspiciously large amount appeared above Mrs. Mishtawa's "slignature" Beth's blue eyes lifted from the paper and fastened themselves with terrible searchingness on Johnny's face.

"Hand 'em over!" she commanded briefly.

"What'm?" asked Johnny, wide-eyed with surprise.

"The dice—the bones!" was her laconic order.

Johnny "dug down" with a grimy hand and produced them.

"Now the loaded ones!" said Beth matter-of-factly.

"De what?"

"The loaded ones! You don't win money like that playin' on the level."

Johnny looked a minute at the stern face of the "p'leece lady," then he dug into another pocket and handed them over.

"Gee!" he remarked admiringly, as he threw them down. "But yer a wise guy."

"Humph!" said Beth loftily, as if that were a very trifling exhibition of her occult powers.

Beth liked her boys. They were young rowdies, but they were very human, and for the most part their offenses were easily condoned. But the girls baffled her. They nearly all inclined to vice as the sparks fly upward, and they were almost or altogether without a sense of virtue. Beth was by nature slow to condemn, and she didn't condemn the girls. She remembered the crowded conditions in which they lived—some statisticians have said that there is an area in the Polish quarter of Chicago more densely populated than any other like area in Christendom—and the unskilled labor of the workers, their slowness to learn the English tongue or adopt American ways. Remembering these things, she tried to excuse the squalor, the drunkenness, even the vice; what she found hardest, not exactly to forgive but to endure, was the apathy, the lack of anything to appeal to.

"I suppose apathy is the poor Poles' necessary self-defense," she said, "but oh, dear, it becomes a positive hari-kari with most of them."

"Any unusual excitement to-day?" pursued Hart Ferris, undeceived by her denial and determined to "get it out of her" if he could.

There was nobody at hand just that moment, and Beth yielded to the feminine temptation to talk it over.

"I had Peter the Greek arrested," she said.

He was interested at once and began, as a newspaper man, to talk about a "story." "Something's got to be done about those Greeks," he began, "there are a lot of them that ought to be put out of business. But they're hard to tackle. You can never get the girls to prosecute."

"Ordinarily I don't blame them," retorted Beth, "the girls, I mean! But these girls here I *do!* It isn't shame that keeps them silent; it's the wretched little bribes of the Greeks, or whoever the offenders may be. It's discouraging, trying to avenge their wrongs, when they'll turn on you in court and side with their destroyers."

He was quick to take advantage of this opening. "Then why," he urged, "do you spend your time reclaiming people who don't want to be reclaimed? Why don't you come and 'uplift' me?

I need you, I want you, I'd appreciate you!"

Beth's little chin went up; being saucy was *her* defensive attitude.

"Reclaim a newspaper man?" she queried incredulously. "I'd rather whittle away at unregenerate Poles!"

Ferris looked about him. There was no one in the big hall, though a babel of sounds proclaimed Settlement activities in every room, bowling below stairs, a choral society in the Guild Hall, dancing in the gymnasium, typewriters clicking in the commercial school, sewing machines whirring in the dressmaking class, awful, groaning noises from a distant, third-story room where a brass band was in process of trying to *be* a band, although at present every bit of brass seemed rankly individualistic.

Ferris calculated that he might reach across the table and lay a hand on Beth's nervously locked little hands; he had learned that in banter she always outlasted him, always beat and eluded him, but that there was a way of brushing past all that and getting straight to the lonely little heart of her by some simple, appealing tenderness. He had just made his calculation and was about to act on it, when the street door was flung open and a big boy of perhaps seventeen stood in the doorway.

"Where's Miss Tully?" he demanded excitedly.

Beth's back was toward the door and he had not recognized her. When she jumped to her feet and wheeled around facing him, he gave a gasp of surprise.

"Joe Probovitch!" she said. "What have you been doing?"

Her tone as she spoke his name was one of surprise merely, but without an instant's perceptible hesitation it became her ordinary accusing tone, as she became mistress of the situation.

Joe drew back confusedly. "I—I jus' come to report," he faltered.

But his eyes were wild and he acted as if he had either been running very fast or had been terribly shaken by something he had seen.

"Report?" Beth was looking him through and through with her keen blue eyes. "Report? Why, your parole to me was up two months ago!"

"I—I t'ought I'd come in an' tell you I didn' git dat job you sent me to," he stammered desperately.

Beth's lip curled, she did not even deign a reply to this fabrication. Stepping quickly up to Joe, who was backing toward the door, she said:

"You've been fighting!"

There was no doubting the righteousness of Joe's repudiation. "No I ain't!" he cried.

"Drinking!"

"No I ain't!"

"Well, you've been in some devilment—yes, you have! And you came here so you could say when you were caught that you'd been at the Settlement reporting to Miss Tully."

Joe's startled expression told her plainly how shrewd her guess had been. When she saw that, she melted.

"Oh, Joe!" she entreated. "How *could* you? I was beginning to have real hopes of you."

Joe burst into tears and fled, and Beth looked so much like following suit that Ferris seized command of the situation.

"Get your hat and come home," he ordered, with tender authority. "You've had enough Probovitches for to-day—darn 'em!"

Mutely, wearily, Beth obeyed. She was a very disheartened little "uplifter" indeed, that night.

"I've had such hopes of Joe," she almost sobbed as she pinned on her hat. "I thought he was going to be a man. It was mainly on his account I got so sad at Wanda."

The crashing thud of balls in the bowling alley continued without ceasing; the shuffling of dancing feet, the repeated false starts of the Paderewski Society, the whirring and clicking and tooting were still in full activity. Ferris thought gratefully of the walk home under the friendly, silent stars, and wished the distance to Beth's "model tenement" were thrice as great. He did not speak at all as he helped her into her coat and tucked in the sleeves

of her rumpled shirt-waist that was all unused to "tucking" even when it was fresh. He wanted to put his hand under her chin and upturn the small anxious face and kiss it where the worries of "uplifting" had left the tiredest pucker; out under the friendly stars he would have dared, but not here, amid all this bleat and blare, with the always imminent possibility of an irreverent young Polack emerging from somewhere and shouting: "Break away!" before he ducked.

All Ferris could do was to facilitate departure, and that he did with energy. He had his hand on the knob and was about to open the door, when it was jerked open from without and Tony Kapusta faced him, breathless, on the threshold.

"Peter the Greek's murdered in his store!" panted Tony, beaming with delight to be the bearer of such exciting news, and without waiting to see how Beth and Ferris took it, he dashed on, intent on creating sensations in each separate assembly at the Settlement.

Beth slipped out into the air and leaned against the outer doorjamb, sick, trembling. Ferris closed the door behind him and waited in silence. After a moment's struggle for self-composure, Beth started down the steps, gripping, however, at the hand rail as she went.

III.

Nothing could have been more ominous than Ferris' polite silence for a few moments, followed by his scrutiny of the sky to see if he could find the Dipper and locate the North Star.

"I've discovered the nicest book," he said, "it tells all about the stars in a way that any one can understand. Now, for instance, I know just how to look for the Pole Star and——"

He had drawn Beth's arm through his when they started, and she gripped his sleeve, now, and shook him by it.

"I don't care about the Pole Star," she said shortly.

"That's because you don't know about it," was his imperturbable rejoinder. "Now, if you and I were lost on the trackless seas or on the Arab desert's burning sands or any place like that, I could look up and find my friend, the North Star, always doing business at the same old stand, and steer you home by it."

"But we're not!" she snapped. It was "snap or cry," she knew. "You're not lost at all, and I'm lost in the Polish quarter of Chicago, where there are no guiding stars—and that's what's the matter with them!"

"It's your fault," he began, "if I'm not lost with you. I'd rather be lost in the Arabian desert with you than found in the Elysian Fields without you——"

Again the angry little shaking of his arm.

"Well?" he queried, knowing perfectly what she meant.

"Well?" she echoed, and waited.

"Do you want me to go with you to the police station?"

"What for?"

"To tell them to look for Joe Probovitch."

"Why should I tell them that?"

"Because you think Joe murdered the Greek."

"I don't know that he did."

"You didn't see him do it; but putting two and two together, you feel pretty sure that he did."

"Not sure enough to report him."

"Why not? You don't want him to get away, do you?"

"I don't know—perhaps I do."

"What! And you an officer of the law?"

"When I'm sure what's right I try to enforce the law. But I'm not sure about Joe. Suppose he didn't do it, and the police get him and don't get any one else, and he has to stand trial? You're a newspaper man; you know how such things go."

"But suppose he did do it? The evidence is against him."

"I'm not so sure it is!" Beth rejoined, with spirit. "I find myself almost hoping he did! If Joe killed the Greek to avenge his sister, Joe's a *man!* And men are scarce, over here.

What goes by that name will fight over almost anything except over the honor of their women. I worked hard with Joe when he was on parole to me. I tried to kindle the spark of self-respecting manhood in him. I pleaded with him and read to him and told him everything I knew of men who *care* and *dare*. And if he's killed the Greek——" Beth stopped, drew her arm from Ferris', clasped her trembling hands together and lifted her quivering face to the eternal stars. "If he's killed the Greek for Wanda, I'll thank God!" she said, with an intensity that shook Ferris with responsive emotion.

"If Joe did it," she went on, "Peter the Greek's well sacrificed to make Joe a man. It's good for the community he's dead," she argued, evidently pleading with her other self as much as with Ferris, "and if Joe's just beginning to feel responsibility, to care about things that make a man different from a dog, do you suppose I'd help to put his head in the hangman's noose?"

"I didn't know," said Ferris dryly, "that you had been hired to interpret the law—I thought you were on oath to uphold it! That's the thing I'm always talking to you about—women are sentimentalists, even about the law. It isn't in them to have respect for the law as an abstract thing, to care above everything to maintain it in its integrity. Your pity is greater than your justice; you want to make an exception of each individual case. There'd be no law if you had your way; you'd make and unmake it for each separate offender. Natural law ought to teach you better. Nature makes no exceptions. You have neither legal nor logical authority to interpret the law for yourself; you are sworn to uphold it as it has made itself out of generations of demonstrated expediency."

"There is," said Beth softly, "a new law that came to transcend the old—it is the law of love. In nearly two thousand years you men haven't done much with it to put down injustice; no, not very much, you must admit. I think it's time the women had a chance. He believed in them, Who made the law."

"Beth!" Ferris' voice was full of tenderness; the clash of combat had all gone out of it. "Beth, dear, He mostly remade the old law by bowing to it and yet transcending it. It was because He submitted Himself to the law that He—helps so. Suppose Joe did it, and goes free? Will his respect for the law be very great? Will this experience help him to be very mindful not to break other laws? Will it?"

Beth was silent for what seemed to her and to him a long time. Then she looked up at him with a world of womanly sweetness in her face.

"I didn't think about that," she said, "but I will."

Without realizing it, they were by a common impulse going out of their homeward way to go past the Greek's store. As they neared it they saw the curious throng gathered as close to the entrance as the police would permit, and, backed up to the curb, the patrol awaiting its gruesome burden.

Near the outskirts of the crowd was Glorkas, the big, homely, kind, shrewd, plain-clothes man with whom Beth had worked so much. He was profoundly ignorant of many things, was Glorkas, and profoundly wise about many others more necessary to his work in the world; he was uncouth and profane and kind and, Beth firmly believed, incorruptible. Ferris, with the deep-dyed skepticism of the newspaper office, laughed at the idea of an incorruptible policeman. But Beth came nearer to knowing the truth.

Glorkas liked Beth. He approved her methods, and worked with her and for her whenever he could. He had his own ideas about crime and criminals, and they would have surprised some of the bright young men in Ferris' office.

Glorkas told them, briefly, what was known of the murder. Peter had had some little difficulty in getting bail and was not released until about eight

o'clock. He had, apparently, gone at once to his store, and he could not have been there many minutes when he was murdered. The store was not lighted up; only a single jet of gas was burning near the rear. But the door was wide open. A man who knew Peter, and knew that he had been arrested, saw the feeble glimmer, the open door, and walked in. He stumbled over Peter's body. The murder had been accomplished with a knife, and there had evidently been a brief scuffle before the fatal lunge.

Beth shuddered. "You an' me," said Glorkas, "we didn' think this afternoon that we'd git this kin' of a finish to our job, did we?"

"Have you any idea who did it?" Ferris asked.

"Not a bit! It couldn' 'a' been none o' them Probovitches, because they ain't got that much spunk. Must 'a' been some dago or Greek—they're allus so handy with their knives. Would you want to go in?" he asked Beth.

"No, oh, no, thank you, not for anything! I must get home; I've had a hard day. Good night, Glorkas."

"Good night, miss. If I hear anything I'll let you know."

The rest of the way home Ferris talked volubly of other things. At Beth's door he said: "Shall I come up?"

She shook her head. "No, please. Good night."

But in the grateful shadow of the doorway she lifted her face to his and kissed him as a woman kisses the man for whose loving care she is profoundly grateful to the good God.

The night was long and sleepless for Beth. Over and over and over in her mind she turned the problem of Joe and the law. In the gray dawn she put on bathrobe and slippers and went out to the back porch to get the paper as soon as the clattering heels of the newsboy told her he had left it. There wasn't much about the murder, but it said that Peter's "brother" was suspected and being sought by the police.

IV.

As early as she could without causing comment in the neighborhood, Beth went over to the Probovitches. No one was up. Mrs. Probovitch's "drunk" had progressed several degrees on Saturday evening, and toward morning Mr. Probovitch had brought home one to match it. The kitchen was still vilely dirty, and the effluvia of combined "poverty smell" and stale liquor fumes assaulted Beth on the threshold and almost drove her back into the comparatively breathable air of the dirty yard.

"Oh, God!" ran her thoughts, half prayer, half meditation. "In their place I'm sure I should do much worse. Something's wrong—something's terribly, terribly wrong—and it isn't Wanda and it isn't Joe!"

Her repeated knocks had brought Wanda to the door. Sure that she was about to be seized, Wanda began to cry.

"Hush!" commanded Beth, mistaking Wanda's distress for knowledge of Joe's guilt. "Where is Joe? I want to help him. I must see him."

Wanda stopped crying. The "p'leece lady's" inquiry for Joe surprised her completely.

"Joe's in bed," she said.

"Tell him to get up, tell him I must see him at once, tell him—tell him I'm in great trouble," Beth went on.

Wanda stared, unable to comprehend the possibility of the "p'leece lady" in trouble. Finally, "I'll tell him," she said, and departed within, leaving the door ajar.

In a minute or two—too quickly to admit a doubt that he had slept in his clothes—Joe came to the door. He seemed more than half asleep, and the fraction of him that was awake was suspicious, defensive.

Beth motioned him out on the porch—the Probovitches lived on the "parlor floor" of a rear cottage—and reaching forward drew to the door behind him.

"Joe," she said, speaking quickly, earnestly, "there's nothing for you to

be afraid of—I give you my word—nobody's after you—it's all on the level. I'm not the 'p'leece lady' now. I'm just your friend. I want to talk to you about something—now—right quick! Will you come over to my house? I'll make a cup of coffee and we'll have a bite of breakfast while we talk."

Joe looked, listened, and believed. Beth's trouble was only too evident in her face; the earnestness in her voice was unmistakable. She had never been known to give any of her wards a pledge she could not and did not keep. Joe knew this, so he went.

On the way back to her little flat Beth avoided the subject nearest her heart, talking to Joe of the boys they knew, of the outlook for "jobs," and the pros and cons of the "beanhouse." Not even Wanda's name was mentioned.

When they had climbed the clean, uncarpeted stairs to Beth's flat and entered her tiny kitchen, she filled her kettle and put it to boil before she even took off her hat and coat. Then she gave Joe the coffee mill and asked him to grind the coffee for her while she was putting on an apron and pulling the little dining table out from against the wall.

When the coffee was boiling and the table was set and Joe sat waiting for her to tell him what she had brought him to hear, Beth felt that she could put it off no longer. She was slicing bread to make toast, and she paused with one hand on the loaf and the other poising the knife, and looked Joe steadily in the face.

"Have you heard that Peter the Greek was killed last night?"

Joe started with such unmistakable surprise that for a moment Beth was almost constrained to think this was news to him. But she reflected that what startled him was doubtless the suddenness of her plunge into the subject.

"No! I didn' know. Who killed 'im?"

"Don't you know?"

"How should I?"

"Joe, if I told the police that at nine o'clock last night, a few minutes after the Greek was murdered, you—the brother of the girl on whose account he had been arrested that afternoon—burst into the Settlement, wild-eyed, evidently trying to establish an alibi, what do you think they'd do? No! I'm not going to tell them—you have my word. But I want you to tell them! I want you to go with me to the captain and tell him you killed the man who destroyed your sister. It won't go hard with you, Joe; everybody forgives that kind of vengeance. Murder's an awful thing, but I'm glad you cared that much, Joe. I'm really very proud of you, but you must be a man about it, you mustn't try to deny it, you mustn't let an innocent man be punished in your stead!"

Joe's face as this torrent of words poured forth was not encouraging. If it had been sullen, defiant, Beth might have felt that more pleading, better pleading were needed to break his defiance down. But he looked blank, uncomprehending.

"How kin I w'en I didn' do it?" he asked, as if deeply puzzled. "How should I kill de Greek? I ain't never seen him, even."

Beth stared at him, speechless. For a long moment she seemed incapable of reply; no words came to her parted lips, no definite thoughts to her startled mind. Laying down the bread-knife carefully, as if afraid of its possibilities in the reeling state of her mind, she went over to Joe and took hold of him by the shoulders, looking down into his face with her wide-open, pale-blue eyes.

"Do you mean—that you didn't—do it?" she said.

"Sure I mean it!" cried Joe.

"Or that you won't tell?" she went on.

"How kin I tell w'at I ain't done?" he demanded, beginning to get angry.

The anger misled Beth, she took it for bluster. While she was trying to think what to do next, her bell rang. When she opened the door and saw Hart Ferris, only the presence of Joe

in her kitchen ten feet away restrained Beth from giving her caller a welcome that would have made him very happy.

"I knew you were anxious," he said as he came in and began to divest himself of overcoat and gloves, "and I called up Sergeant Thompson at headquarters and asked him if there was anything new about the Greek murder."

"And what did he say?" interrupted Beth breathlessly.

"He said," smiling down at her, "that they have caught brother, and he has confessed."

"O-oh!" It was almost a little shriek Beth gave.

"Yes, this fellow, who now says he isn't Peter's brother, went back to the store, about eight o'clock, to reconnoitre. No one was there, so he let himself in with his key and was trying the combination of the safe when Peter returned stealthily, and stole upon him with a knife. This fellow 'drew,' in self-defense, he says—and that's all. They got him in a Greek saloon on Halsted Street about half-past one."

"Joe!" called Beth. Joe came. "Did you hear that?"

"Yes'm."

"I'm sorry, Joe. I wouldn't have misjudged you for the world. But don't you see? It *did* look as if you might have done it! Now, what made you come to the Settlement? Remember! I promised not to tell."

"Why," began Joe, twirling his cap and seeming to be studying it intently. "I was wid de fellas an' we wasn' doin' nuttin', an' some odder fellas had broke a cigar-store winda an' stole a lot o' cigars, an' one o' the fly cops come along, what never ketches de real guys an' has to be allus makin' a bluff by ketchin' some one, an' he sez: 'I bet youse fellas done it, all right.' An' some o' de guys begun t' argue wid him, but I cut loose. After you once been to de beanhouse dey're allus lookin' fer you, an' I t'ought if I went by you, you'd say fer me dat I couldn' 'a' stole no cigars because I was to de Settlement."

"I see," said Beth. "But if this Greek hadn't been caught, or if I had told on you, don't you see how badly things might have looked for you, Joe?"

"Oh, I don' know," Joe answered loftily, "any cop dat knows me knows dat I ain' de knifin' kind—I may be gay, but I ain' no stickin' dago."

"Oh!" said Beth, avoiding Ferris' eye.

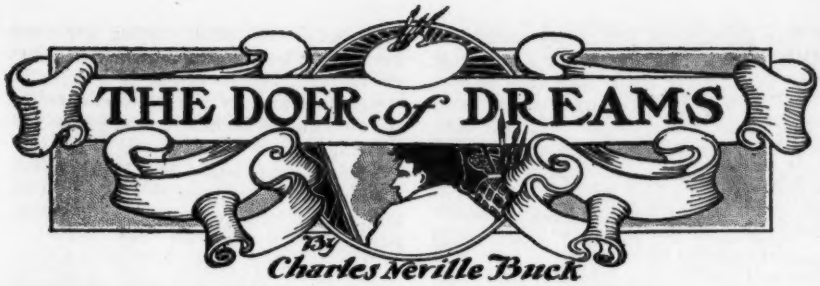
"For a fellow like that," said Ferris when Joe was gone, "you were willing to jeopardize the law. I tell you, Beth, you women are incurable sentimentalists. Better leave the law to the sterner sex."

Beth murmured something that her lover couldn't quite hear, but he took it for a confession of weakness. She was toying nervously with the top button of his coat and evidently studying the pattern of his Sunday vest.

"What would you have done if Joe seemed to be guilty and I didn't tell?" she asked softly, as if it didn't really matter now.

"Oh, I don't know," he answered cheerfully. "It would have been hard, I suppose, to forego the scoop for my paper. But I suppose I'd have done it for you, dear. I wouldn't want to seem to be working against you, wouldn't want to interfere with what you thought was right. You're such an earnest little 'uplifter,' I don't think I could have thrown you down."

"For a girl like me, then," said Beth, smiling up at him, "even you would jeopardize the law?"



"I ACCEPT the challenge—none the less a challenge because unspoken. The light shallop, sheering before Bohemian gusts, hereby enters combat against the well-ballasted ship that ploughs its charted course, obedient to compass and reckonings, scornful of winds that deviate and tides that tempt."

With the last words Colvin emerged from behind the screening easel. From one hand bristled a sheaf of brushes, and the thumb balanced the huge palette that he loved to use, smirched and smeared with such riot of pigments as gave him his colorful range. In the other hand he waved his long mahlstick in a sword salute. "Yes," he repeated, with an infectious smile, "I accept the challenge."

The girl posing before the screen, over which he had draped a tawny covering for background, responded with a smile that broke across her erstwhile serious face like sudden sun through sober skies.

"Good Lord!" he exploded in instant admiration. "Can you hold that a moment—that smile? No, it's no use, I couldn't catch it!"

Acting upon the tacit release that came with his knocking off from work, she rose and stretched her arms with a luxurious yawn. Straightway, Colvin saw art only in a yawning model.

They made an incongruous pair. She had donned the gown he liked best, a filmy affair of white, with sleeves that ended at the elbows in trailing clouds of softness.

"I like that one best for several reasons," the portrait-painter had ruled after a critical review of the half-dozen changes of costume that had preceded the posing, "but I believe I like it chiefly because only a woman born to the purple could keep those elbow streamers out of her soup—I half want to do you eating an oyster stew—just as a demonstration!"

With carefully affected shabbiness, he was garbed in a blue army-shirt, sleeves uprolled over bare forearms; and wide-legged trousers that had survived student days in the Latin Quarter. His clothes were smeared and crusted with pigment like the overalls of a sign-painter, for he abstractedly wiped his broad brushes and palette knives as he worked, too absorbed to think of outer details.

The broad lengthwise hall of the Kentucky country house, that was her home, had been requisitioned for a studio. Between the rugs, which had been rolled back, the exact position of easel and model's chair had been chalked on the hardwood floor. The painter drew occasional inspiration from the ripe old Jouett portraits on the wainscoted walls. Doors, white-framed and wide, stood open at front and back, flooding the place with light, and letting in from behind broad, yellow splashes of sun. From the front the eye swept a stretch of undulating blue-grass meadow and woodland, checkered with wheat-fields, and from that direction floated the distant whir of threshing engines. Spires of a village in the middle distance shimmered in the hot radiance of the July after-

noon. To the rear, when the painter turned for a glance over his shoulder, he saw the deep shade of lilac bushes and walnut trees, and the fresh wholesomeness of whitewashed fences and barns.

"I didn't challenge," the girl said, "I didn't even criticise." She came over and stood before the canvas with an indrawn breath of admiration.

Colvin stood at her side, and studied his work through half-closed lashes, comparing picture and original.

"What do you think of it?" was his final question.

She studied it seriously. "As a picture—superb," she answered. "As a portrait—a failure. It's an idealization. Whether you talk or paint, you remain the flatterer."

He threw back his head half defiantly. "The same old accusation," he said. "It is you, as I see you. I am trying to paint sincerely. I want that to be my best work. It has been my ambition to do your portrait ever since —well, for a long while."

She shook her head. "It proves what I have claimed. You don't know me. Here you are painting a woman that you see in dreams—and the dreams are not real. You fancy that you love me, and that is a dream, too. Don't you see that until you love the woman who *is* me, not the woman whom you construct from your imagination, I can't count your devotion as real or stable?"

"If I could love you temperately and impersonally with a soulless sort of concentrated friendship," he retorted, "you would believe in my love. Well, I can't."

She stood silently gazing at the portrait. He, as silently, scraped the paint stains from his forearm with the palette knife.

It was she who broke the silence, speaking as one who half consciously voices a reverie. "Your art is your real love. I am merely your favorite hallucination."

He took up her words quickly and hotly, almost before she had finished them.

"That is not true. Alice, dear, why will you insist on deceiving yourself and cheating me of my rightful happiness?"

She went on in the same unconvinced tone. "If *he* were painting me —though that is an almost laughable hypothesis—he would see me as I am. He would no more ignore my defects than he would overlook my merits, and I should feel sure that, in spite of those faults, his love was a certain thing. With you there would be the constant knowledge that you are a devoted sleepwalker, and the certainty that some day you would wake up."

"And you," he argued hotly, "with some Calvinistic delusion fancy that you want a life partner who will call you 'my dear,' and lose all identity as a lover when he is sworn in as a husband. My love is of the Southern Cross; it's not the pale anemic sentiment of the Esquimaux under the Pole Star!"

She laughed indulgently, making him feel like a boy, despite the few years that he was her senior. "Is that your idea of Joe?" she asked, smiling. "Yet the Pole Star is good to steer by."

"Porter is all right," he hastened to amend. "He's my friend as well as my rival, but I am not arguing Porter's case. He is lawyer enough to do that for himself, I fancy."

She laid a hand on his arm, and he drew back. "Watch out, I'm full of paint!" he warned.

"I want you to understand me," she said earnestly. "You are a dreamer of dreams. It was so ordained from the beginning. Then, too, you are a genius. He is—well, almost a plodder. The elements of beauty in life that you worship are nothing to him; and your doctrine of Joy of Living is to him well-nigh a heresy. In some ways, his nature is color blind, but he has courage and determination. The beauty you profess to see in me is of small importance to his love; the proficient little tricks of conversation that you admire, that bring men around me in a drawing-room, rather annoy him.

Yet he loves me for something that underlies all that. It would be the same if I were suddenly stricken with ugliness. You see the same things that other men do. He sees something else."

"I see all that he does, and a thousand things to which he is blind," he broke in, with an impetuous onslaught of contradiction.

"Wait, I am not through. You have it in your power to be great, yet you are satisfied to paint on in a desultory way. He may never be great, but he will always be keyed to his maximum, while you will always be wasting your force. Some day you will crave the fame you might have had, and will wake to find that 'the good gift when it comes, comes a moment too late.' A few days ago I found you completely engrossed in studying the smoke from the end of your cigar. You were living in a world of mist."

"It was pure violet," he defended. "It was a reminder of many beautiful things. Your eyes are the same violet. It stood for your eyes, for Indian-summer horizons, for Mediterranean waters, for perfect climes. Does the fact that I respond to the clarion of the beautiful make me a poorer lover?"

"A better lover, perhaps, but a lover of briefer passion." She mused. "You are a sort of human lyre. You are touched, and you respond in art, and in keeping with the scheme you are well polished—and very artificial."

He bowed low in ironical acknowledgment as one accepting sentence. "And what is your simile for him?"

She looked away, half sadly, beyond the canvas, through the open door. "I shall have to mix metaphors. I think of him as a shag-bark hickory, standing rather alone and bare in an open field. The only melody he can make is that primal music of the wind in the branches. But he can weather storms, and where there is roughness, there is apt to be strength and endurance and a strong heart."

"And you are no melancholy wood nymph, to find peace in the scarred heart of the hickory," he declared, with conviction, leaning forward toward her as he spoke. "You are the woman of infinite variety, and unconsciously your temperament is as truly bound in the artistic as mine."

She dropped into a chair, and he seated himself on the floor at her feet, just far enough away to keep the paint smears from the filmy whiteness of her skirts.

"If I could only be sure," she mused, "that the lyre needed me as much as the shag-bark hickory. So many people can play upon the strings—so few give expression to the saga of the lonely tree."

"You must hear me out," he said, looking up at her steadily, though with hunger in his eyes. "You are wrong in all your premises, and it is a matter about which it will not do to make a mistake. You admire Porter for his assertive manliness; the woman in you bows to his combative masculine, and you are in danger of mistaking this for love. He sees life in slate-grays and bold blacks and whites, and bows to an ideal that is a sober god of sternness. *You* belong to me—you have no place in the camp of the Roundheads. We have breathed the same air, we are children of this soil. You are mine by every law of nature—except that I am not worthy of you."

He reached up and caught the hand that fell over the arm of her chair in his own paint-stained fingers, kissing it as reverently as a loyal knight might have kissed the condescending fingers of his queen. The girl unconsciously responded to the touch of the chivalric in his attitude, and felt with a flush that that was wanting in Porter.

"You are not without an influence, Sir Cavalier," she laughed down at him. "I am not an unbiased judge when you plead your cause, but he needs me. He is a toiler, and I could be an encouragement, and after all, that is half a woman's mission."

He had risen, and this time he took both her hands in his. "It is not that I fail to sound the real depths of love, dearest," he declared in a voice that

went soft and earnest, "but you must decide. One of us must lose, and that one of us will do it without a whimper, I fancy. The question that is much more vital, is which of us can make you happier, and that is what I am arguing for. Don't make a mistaken decision! Decide against me if it will make for your happiness, but not for any mistaken reason of duty to him!"

She did not withdraw her hands, but looked at him with level eyes.

"The real question is also who needs me most—the worker or the genius," she answered half aloud.

"The challenge again," he laughed. "And again I accept it. It's the doer of deeds against the dreamer of dreams! So be it! We shall enter the lists of deeds. If he worsts me I shall insist on being an usher, and shall save a scarfpin out of the wreck. In the meanwhile, you will wait? You will give me time to leave dear Arcady and work seriously before you decide? We are all young enough to brook some delay. I must have time to become a doer of dreams, you know."

The girl nodded her assent.

It was seven months later that the February twilight was falling, as Colvin sat in his Eastern studio, before the canvas upon which he had worked uninterruptedly since morning. The young ruffian who had been posing in the "partially draped" for one of the heroic figures of the group was pulling on his soiled sweater, and Colvin slashed on feverishly with palette knife and brush against the fast failing of the light.

He labored with spirits as bleak as the raw fog that came with twilight, smothering the roofs and streets that spread under his windows, drearily streaked by alternate thaws and freezes. For several months he had missed his normal buoyancy, and had grown, half consciously, to dread the choking shadows of nightfall. There had been times, too, when the vague depression had settled down on him in the glare of lighted cafés and places of amusement, and he had felt the undefined impulse to creep away and hide. The ambitious canvas he had undertaken in an intoxication of enthusiasm had come to pall on him, and the scheme, a detail from "The Skeleton in Armor" inspired by the lines:

> Oft as I told in glee
> Tales of the stormy sea,
> Soft eyes did gaze on me,
> Burning yet tender.

had grown stale and spiritless.

Unmindful of the fact that he had of late ignored the needful fillips of exercise and recreation, he had painted on with clenched teeth instead of with enthused eyes and leaping pulses. He brushed away the cobwebs that occasionally seemed to cloud his brain, with determination—and a laugh.

Into this picture, and the dozen charcoal sketches in detail for its composition, he had thrown his soul with vigor and fearlessness until it seemed to chant out in simple greatness of form and tone. But of late his palette had grown dull. He was spurred on at all times by the knowledge that Porter in the law office around the corner was toiling on tirelessly and successfully toward his goal of a modicum of success. They talked together of their efforts and ambitions—the bench for Porter, the Salon for Colvin. Neither mentioned the inspiration that was the common mainspring.

Now in the studio, which had become a distasteful workshop, amid the few surrounding casts and sketches, Colvin felt himself sinking deeper into melancholy as a man is sucked downward in a morass. Suddenly he rose and shook himself. "I believe I am getting blue," he said, and laughed. His laugh in the bare room startled him. It was hollow. The undefined misery and dizziness that attacked him seemed ominous. His own vikings leered at him from the darkening canvas.

He returned to the studio after a desolate meal, eaten alone, even more abjectly the victim of his mood. He would write to Alice—that was one thing that would banish morbid thoughts.

He bent over his desk with throbbing temples, then with a half-stifled groan he rose from his chair. He felt cold sweat beads stealing down his forehead. Then the real terror struck in on him and froze him into horror. He remembered melancholiacs he had seen sitting around ward walls in asylums, with fixed misery on their faces and backs bent into hopeless curves under the burden of their sad madness. It required an effort to choke back a scream of fear, yet he felt that if he once loosened his grip on self-control his reason would desert him. So his end was to be a sanitarium where he would sit ridden by relentless agony that is quieter than death and more terrible than tortures in hell.

Every sketch smirked evilly from the screens and corners, and he rushed about the place, turning their faces to the wall. Thoughts of suicide came and went with the hideous days and sleepless nights until at last he found himself seated, trembling, in the consultation room of a famous nerve specialist. Something tied his tongue. He parried and evaded, speaking of sleeplessness, vertigo, and inability to work, and a hundred unimportant features of his condition. The alienist looked on keenly, and the sweat beads on the patient's forehead did not escape his notice. Then began a catechism that startled Colvin, so accurately did the questions touch the vital points.

"Is my mind going back on me—is it melancholia?" asked the patient desperately, adding hastily: "I insist on knowing. There are matters to be arranged."

"Yes," laughed the physician, "I know all about it. I've seen 'em before. There is the question of deciding between poison and pistol, and the necessary details to make it appear accidental. I should order you to cheer up, but I know the malady too well to waste words. It will be months—perhaps a year—before you can carry out that injunction. I am going to be frank because I see that you have the necessary nerve. It usually takes them longer to tell it. Your brain is as sound as mine, but your nerves are shattered. For a time there will be little difference between your condition and that of a melancholiac, but yours will pass with absolute rest and travel."

There was more of the interview, and a temporary relief that did not long survive, since although his brain told him that he was suffering only a nervous breakdown, his haunting fear insisted that he was going mad.

Alice, together with all of the old life, seemed but shadowed out of former æons by a memory striking back through blackness. After a few miserable letters, he wrote her that he was suffering from a nervous collapse which made writing impossible and dropped the correspondence.

Of course, he told himself, Alice could never understand why a man should dread a sheet of letter paper because she could never know that every time he saw one that *other moment* in the studio with its first sickening fear of lunacy came back and renewed itself. She could never understand, either, he supposed, why the sight of a paint brush or a stretched canvas should rouse up a host of vague fears and start the sweat on his forehead. Alice was lost to him, but everything was seen through a gray fog, and he could not bring himself to care.

He fled from his familiar places and wandered at random, brooding over a melancholy glass of claret at a Seville sidewalk café or seeking to stifle consciousness of self in the crowded native quarters of Algiers and Stamboul.

Slowly, however, matters in part righted themselves and the disturbed centre of gravity found again its line of direction. In another year he was once more drinking in the "atmosphere" that his eyes discovered so keenly in queer corners of the world. Once more his senses leaped in response to Beauty's challenge, and he turned to his brush for expression. Once more he drew in the ateliers that look across the river on the Louvre, but now the masters criticised his work as a brother artist.

Often over the shoulder of a strug-

gling tyro they would say: "Observe Colvin. His palette is a revelation. *Color* is food to his soul—in a colorless world, he would starve."

And Colvin, perched all unconscious, shielded behind a huge paint-crusted studio palette, amid a litter of tubes and brushes, would see and catch on his canvas flesh tones that were all his own, yet true and splendid. There was a staid richness about his work that caught and held the true eye. Sometimes as he studied the bright glow in the cheeks of a model of exceptional coloring, thoughts of Alice came back, vague and wraith-like, to haunt him. If he had ever really cared, he mused, why should even a ghost of his old love refuse to come out of the past to the conjuring of his imagination? True, a fellow who is fighting a crowding horde of phantom fears and making bets with himself on the probabilities of keeping out of a lunatic asylum, has little use for love. Lunatics must not marry.

Why could he not at least feel a thrill of heartache as he looked back into the past "Where his April love lay dead"? Then, in despair, he would tell himself that Alice belonged to a world from which he was cut off by terrible memories, a world which he could only regain, it seemed, by going back into that valley of misery and despair and rousing up again all the haunting shapes that peopled it.

Finally, he sent for his viking group, and awaited its coming with anxiety. Would the Norsemen still leer at him? Would the eyes his own brushes had painted stab into his vision and terrify him? He was not yet sure enough of himself to be positive that so strong a reminder could be tranquilly faced. At all events, he should see.

When the group arrived, the masters stood before it with undisguised delight.

"It is wonderful!" was the verdict. "You have but to finish it, and your place among the greater painters of your time is beyond dispute or cavil."

"Form and mass must be accurate —no more," commented Colvin. "A draughtsman may attain them. It is in color that Art reigns supreme. I believe I can see colors."

They set his canvas up in one of the larger ateliers, and several younger satellites came in to paint, and followed not only the figure on the model throne, but as well the figure on Colvin's canvas. Here they painted day by day, the whole place silent and absorbed for long periods save for the grating of a blade on a stick of charcoal, the annoyed exclamation of a student whose work went wrong, or the clatter of a falling palette knife. Then during the period when the model rested they stretched their arms and relighted forgotten pipes and sang jolly songs, often choosing an English ditty in his honor, and rolling the refrain among the skylights until the sketches on the wall shook with the volume of their strangely pronounced words.

Meanwhile, with the zest of returned health, as fresh and vigorous as the young greens in the Gardens of the Tuilleries, and the new-born joy of a Paris spring in his pulses, he worked on furiously and finished the picture as he had begun it, in a glow of enthusiasm that radiated from every brush stroke. It was the talk of the ateliers, and its acceptance for the Salon was not spoken of as a thing that admitted of doubt. Other pictures, too, were accepted, and he had the pleasure of seeing his work hung in the hall of fame.

Then the vagabond spirit called imperatively to him of the trail. With a pleasant sense of vacation, he boarded a steamer and after a time found himself in Panama. From the isthmus, he dropped, impulse-driven, down the west coast, and sat one day on the broad stretch of yellow sand close to the rocks where the surf breaks on the edge of San Lorenzo Island, in the Bay of Callao. A spot of shade from a great rock that jutted up like a nugget of rough ore shielded him and his light sketching easel from the afternoon sun.

On the canvas was sketchily blocked an impression of the blue bay, with its

untidy thicket of masts and shipping. In middle distance and background showed the khaki-colored houses of adobe, squat-roofed and casting purple shadows against the glare. There were occasional ragged splotches of green, where a banana palm stood out conspicuous against the olive-drab. Then, far beyond, stretched the bald mountains, softening into the cloudless, spotless sky of hot blue. The two *cholos,* who had rowed him out from the city, lay at length down near the water, their inevitable cigarettes sending blue rings up to melt in the bluer sky, into which they gazed lazy and unblinking.

Out in the bay, but beyond the field of the view he had chosen for his canvas, somewhat apart from the inlying merchantmen, rode a squat, white hull, with low, compact superstructure. Her stacks were smokeless, and her rigging and decks were gay with bunting. She was plainly a war ship, in holiday garb. Colvin had arranged his canvas to eliminate her, because her riot of color and glaring white sides offended the harmony of tones to his eye. With a casual glance in toward the wharves and quay, he saw a tiny white boat put off and take a straight line for her anchorage. As she danced on the American flag lay out, fluttering without a droop, from her staff. The painter glanced back, measuring the distance of the launch's journey.

Then as he lazily watched the ship, a sudden puff of brown smoke broke from her starboard side and a dull boom floated indolently across the sparkling bay. Boom after boom, they came, and with sudden recognition that they were saluting that other little flag —his flag!—came a strange new sensation, a homing instinct. He came to his feet and uncovered his head.

While the guns boomed on for the full salute given the approaching American envoy, Colvin stood with the strangely new conviction that he was *homesick.* Then there came, faint but sweet, across the intervening water, the music of the ship's band; and as he bent forward with a shielded ear hearing again the familiar strains of "My Old Kentucky Home," he threw back his head and sang an accompaniment.

The lolling natives glanced up and grinned. Certainly these gringoes were energetic beyond necessity! Well, if the foreign *hombre* had a stroke from singing in the sun it was not their affair! The gulls wheeled by, a little farther off, but the painter stood with bared head and sang until the music ceased, conscious of a great, new welcome throbbing in his breast, and the call *North* across ten thousand miles of land and sea!

He sat for a few moments idle before the sketch, then suddenly springing up and walking down to the beach, he looked northward and solemnly said to the sea and mountains:

"Alice, I'm coming. God grant I be in time!"

The natives with grave politeness responded: *"Si, señor,"* and made mental reservation that the gringo was *loco.*

After that there were interminable days and nights of sea travel. All day the passenger from Callao paced the deck, puffing his pipe, sufficient to himself. Then when the night of the southern seas came with indigo skies and big luminous stars, leaping at the heels of the suddenly dying day, and the phosphorescent waters lashed themselves into frantic fire, he would lean with his elbows on the rail at the bow, and gaze reflectively down at the frothing water and up at the low hanging Southern Cross.

He settled many things. He planned the bungalow he should build on the farm, decorated with the things he had collected from the corners of the world. It should be the studio where he would paint Alice whenever she would pose —and of course, there would be landscape sketches, too, to fill up the time and feed his hunger for outdoor color. It would be autumn in Kentucky, and there would be the blue smoke haze on the horizon; and the crimson on the maples like a trumpet blare. There would be the clean fragrance of burn-

ing strawricks and of recently cut hemp in the air. He could hear the negroes singing on their way from the fields with corn knives and hemp hooks under their arms. There would be the old glories of spirited gallops with Alice along the smooth turnpikes, and rambles along the Elkhorn, and the joy of life and love.

One detail he settled. When he met Alice first, unless she were entirely alone, he would play the game of complete self-repression. He would greet her as a disciple of Plato, not as a server of Eros enlisted for the war. The long explanation of his protracted silence, the circumstances of the hiatus in his natural-life enthusiasms, which he saw now had only added keenness to his capacity for feeling them, must have a suitable time for expression.

It should perhaps be as they walked their horses after a canter along a certain stretch of road he had in mind, where the walnut trees shade the turnpike from behind the limestone fence on one side, and the view stretches away across undulating squares of cornfields and pastures on the other. Then, as they let the reins hang, he would plead his cause anew. He came as a delinquent, but she would know that he was in no wise forgetful. He had succeeded in the list of deeds, and the future held as much more as he chose to grasp.

Suppose she had not waited? He dismissed the thought with a laugh. She had promised. It was a pity Porter must lose! He wished that Alice had a twin sister precisely like herself, only in that event Porter would have to be satisfied with the other; he, himself, must have Alice.

He found the American papers had not been silent about his now famous viking group, and his Paris triumphs had been duly and flamboyantly chronicled.

At last he dropped off the car vestibule at the village whose spires he had watched through the July shimmer on that afternoon of the challenge. The sun was setting, and it seemed he had been away only a week. The same familiar figures lounged on the crushed-stone platform or stood, hands deep in trousers pockets, about the depot.

Then—his heart pounded crazily—he caught sight of the polished panels of a runabout, and a dear familiar figure leaning forward holding the reins over a restive horse. At the horse's head—but that was a mere detail—stood Porter, ready to seize the bit, but obediently keeping hands off until called upon. They did not see him until he was upon them, by this time well in hand, smiling but almost formal in the simplicity of his greeting. The girl gave a little start and an exclamation like a sublimated scream of delight. Then as Colvin calmly shook hands, he saw the sudden light die out of her eyes, and one of every-day friendliness come in its place.

"It's glorious!" he said, drawing a long breath. "There's nothing like it on the other side."

"You must come over for dinner tonight, and tell us all about yourself," she declared. "There are to be a few people there—we need only a celebrity. I can't let you escape. Will you drive out with me? I will chain Joe to the chariot wheel, and let him run along the side," she laughed, "because he has not painted a famous picture!"

"I've hung a man, figuratively at least, and that's more than hanging canvas," protested Porter.

"No, you people drive on out. As for me, it's too fine to ride—I walk. I want to stop and rubber every few steps, and hear the grasshoppers rattle off as I kick 'em up out of the weeds. I'm entertaining a few thoughts. What time do you dine, same as in old days?"

"Yes, run along home and pin on your orders and ribbons, and don't be late!" answered the girl, as she flecked the horse with the whip, and Porter jumped for the step.

The air was spiced nectar; the russet, yellow, and vermilion trees trembled in the long, slanting shafts of the sunset's dusty gold. At the crest of the next hill, as he walked, he saw the runabout, with Porter leaning for-

ward in earnest talk. Even at that distance the intensity of his attitude was noticeable. Poor Porter! Colvin was genuinely sorry for him, but he would recover in time.

And when later, refreshed and in evening clothes, he ran light-heartedly up the old stone steps by the old hitching post, and entered the wide hall of Alice's home, the Jouetts seemed to smile with mellow welcome from their age-stained frames. He had only a glimpse of Alice as she laughingly passed him on to her mother who discovered a slight cough and compelled him to swallow aconite; to her father who had to take him back to a library on a mission of passing epicurean judgment on something secreted there; to each member of the family, in turn.

Then he went on a tour of the house seeking Alice. Everything was as it had been, everything was better than anywhere else. He paused, as if renewing some ancient rite, to pour himself a glass of water from the same old dented silver pitcher that had belonged to a remote ancestor. Guests he encountered, members of the family who told him to "go on and hunt for her," but Alice herself was nowhere. At last he thought of the "triangle room," back of the library, where Alice used to withdraw for her most "secret secrets" long ago, where he had proposed to her at fifteen and divers other ages. Perhaps she might be there now. Why not again? With a laugh he turned into the adjoining room—and halted.

Alice sat in a deep leather chair where the fire, snapping in the broad fireplace, illumined her and caused wonderful vermilion and crimson lights to dance on her cheeks and temples and shoulders. At her feet sat Porter. He was looking up gravely.

"It has been a long hard fight," said the man slowly. "I have waited so long—at times I have been hopeless, but hopelessness only makes triumph more complete, and now——" he smiled the slow grave smile that was one of his characteristics of expression —"I am happier—far happier than had it all been easy. Since you say I've done enough."

Alice spoke in a deep rich voice. "Enough?" she said. "It is more than enough, dear. I am proud of you beyond saying."

Colvin felt a stunned sensation, and his head jerked suddenly back on his neck as though he had received a crushing and unexpected blow in the face. He seemed to hear a wild rushing as of volumes of water and could no longer make out what Alice was saying. He must go, yet somehow it seemed to take him an interminable time to convey the mandates of his brain to his muscles. He should have known it. He saw it all now. She had waited until she saw him, and seeing him had decided against him. Then he saw Alice lean forward. He turned and went with a heavy step to the library, where he dropped himself into a chair and began the work of rearranging his life.

If he had stayed a fraction of a moment later, he told himself, he would have seen her kiss the other man. He had come ten thousand miles to witness his own defeat. The roaring in his ears was the falling of his hopes—the tumbling of his air castles!

How long he sat he did not know. He looked up to see Alice standing above him, laughing at him.

"Sir Dreamer of Dreams!" she softly said. "What do you see in the coals?" He rose and stood looking down at her with miserable eyes into which he slowly forced a smile.

"I had hoped," he said quietly, "that I had vindicated myself. That at last I had done my work—had come with the set task accomplished, had lived down the title of Dreamer."

He attempted to speak lightly, even smilingly, but somehow his voice tricked him with a ring of bitterness.

The girl turned and looked at his face, red from the fire, but set and hardened. Her eyes opened in an expression of wonderment. "I do not understand," she said. "You have done such a work as few men could do—

have done it magnificently. You are wearing the laurels now. Don't you find them worth while?"

He shook his head, and smiled a shade bitterly.

"No, Cassandra."

"Cassandra!" she echoed.

"Yes, you once prophesied it."

"Prophesied what?"

"Those lines from Lucile:

"To most of us ere we go down to our grave,
Fate, relenting, accords the one gift we would have.
But as though through some strange imperfection of fate,
The good gift, when it comes, comes a moment too late."

"Why too late?" she demanded. "Things for you have just begun."

"No," he answered. "For me, things have ended. I have lost my self-respect. Listen, Alice." As in the old days when he was painting her he sat at her feet and gathered his knees between his clasped hands. "I once said that—that the one of us who lost you would bear it without whimpering. I am whimpering now. I have been a cad."

She looked silently into the fire and he went on.

"I ought to congratulate you and old Porter."

"Yes, you should congratulate Joe—dear old Joe!" she agreed, with a contemplative smile. "But why me?"

"The same reason," he replied in a stolid voice. "You aren't the sort that does a thing like that unless you want to. If you want to, you are to be congratulated."

"But," she objected, "I haven't been elected district attorney. I haven't defeated vindictive political enemies and made things better for the people."

Colvin sat suddenly upright. "Alice! Alice!" he shouted. "I haven't the right to ask perhaps. I begin to see that I have no rights. But humbly, abjectly, I beg you, tell me. Are you engaged to Porter? No, before your answer stops me, let me say it once more at least. I love you."

The girl looked steadily into the blaze and the flush was not all from the fire. "Perhaps you haven't any right," she answered. "But I have. I shall quote a line of poetry, too, Sir Doer of Dreams:

"The gates are mine to open, as the gates are mine to close!"

"That may mean anything." He had half risen and was kneeling at the arm of her chair, his breath bated, his voice low.

She paused, then leaning forward she dropped a hand on each of his shoulders. "My heart has no gate that is closed to you," she said. "I found out soon after you left that you only held the key."

EAST AND WEST

EASTWARD—see the dawn is waiting,
Fair and flower-white,
Peering thro' the broken grating
Of the night.

Westward—shadowed sky is sleeping
On the dusky hill,
And on high one star is keeping
Vigil still.

TORRANCE BENJAMIN.

EVERY MAN HIS OWN SYMPHONIST

By Rupert Hughes

A CORPORAL is the general of a handful of men, or a squad; a sergeant, of two handfuls, or a section; a lieutenant controls a platoon; a captain, a company; and so on up to the major general who directs a division of brigades. The difference between leading a squad of men to the firing line—or away from it as the case may be—and of devising the movements of a vast assembly of units along different roads at different speeds, to arrive together for the grand ensemble of a battle, is an enormous difference. The latter is one of the major feats of the human intellect.

A young girl sits in a field under a red sunshade and, with one eye on the landscape and the other on an inquisitive cow, makes a more or less important water color sketch. There is a whole world of space between her achievement and the composition of a great canvas or the architect's designing of a cathedral or a capitol, taking into consideration all the questions of expense of material and labor, of adjustment of space to lighting and heating, of thrust and strain, and wind and weather, and combining all this science with an emotional artistic design—there is a world of space.

Between the anecdotage of the village raconteur, tilted back before the grocery stove, and the finished product of a dramatist evolving a play in which a dozen or more characters are personally conducted to the climax—is another planetary space.

There is the same astronomical distance between the improvisation of a pickaninny on a rail fence pouring his soul into a bucolic mouth organ and the pictorial-dramatical-architectural strategy of the composer of a symphony.

Commanding armies, compiling cathedrals, composing encyclopedias, constructing philosophic systems, and generaling orchestral compositions—these are all major achievements, and the musical feat ranks well up.

Leaving aside the result of the effort—whether the Napoleon finds a Marengo or a Moscow, whether the Michelangelo builds a Vatican or an eyesore, whether Rubens paints a "Descent from the Cross" or one of those awful historical things in the Louvre; whether Shakespeare writes a "Hamlet" or that terrible thing called "Pericles, Prince of Tyre"—leaving aside all question of success or failure, the mere completion of the work is a proof of ambition and of intellect of a superlative degree.

But, as it needs men to make armies, and it needs populations to use cathedrals and pay for them, so the musical creator must have a sympathetic audience or his work is chaos in a vacuum.

The appreciative student or spectator needs also a major training and intelligence.

Listening to a symphony is in itself an art. Listening to it intelligently is a proof of intellect. Listening to it sympathetically is a proof of soul.

Few people who listen realize how much work the composer has done for them or how much they are doing for the composer.

Sidney Lanier, who not only wrote beautiful poetry but also wrote about music, has a page in the essay curiously titled "From Bacon to Beethoven," in which he says:

If the player's part is by no means the trifling work which many imagine, the conductor's will certainly impress one who becomes acquainted with it for the first time as requiring an amount of mental strain little suspected by those who see only the graceful curves of the baton and the silent figure that moves it. The conductor must read simultaneously all the bars written for each class of the instruments in his orchestra, the notes being written under each other, those for the piccolo and flutes at the top, those for the double-basses at the bottom, the rest between. But this large collection of notes, which have thus to be instantaneously read, is written not only in different keys, but with different clefs; the horns and clarinets may each be playing in different keys from the other instruments; the tenor trombones will be playing notes written upon a still different system; the violoncellos, notes written upon a still different system; the double-basses and bassoons and bass trombones and drums, notes written upon yet another system.

And this is not half; for while the conductor's eye is reading these notes his ear has to watch over each one of his sixty to a hundred and fifty instruments, and instantly report the least failure of one to play exactly what is written; and this is not nearly all; for, besides, the conductor's arm must keep up the unceasing beats of time, and must make the different expression-signs, i.e., the signals for loud or soft, or slower or faster, and the like.

Fancy, in other words, that you had a class in elocution of sixty pupils, all of whom simultaneously read aloud to you—some in Greek, some in Hebrew, some in French, some in Latin, some in English, and that the least fault in pronouncing any word of any of these languages, or the least error even in inflection or intonation, must be detected. This is a fair analogy to the labor of the orchestral conductor.

But in the wonderment at this amazing achievement, let it not be forgotten that before the conductor could conduct, the composer had to compose. Your Beethovens and Schumanns must conceive these ideas, devise these melodies, and then write them in all these languages for all these instruments, with the one total effect always in mind. That is why the composing of any sort of symphony is a major feat of the human mind. However uninspired it may prove, the making of it merely correct is colossal.

In the good old times a few very wealthy people, usually princes and things, had real music in their homes. They had perhaps a Mozart in the musical family and let him eat with the other servants. The middle class and the poor had perhaps a lute or a fiddle of some kind which went well enough in the moonlight to a prejudiced lady or an indulgent family.

Nobody had a piano, not even the richest, for the piano was not yet invented. The substitutes, spinets, clavichords and the like, were more like elaborate mandolins than anything else, and their resources were of the poorest.

Then came the nineteenth century when the piano conquered the world. It became necessary furniture.

In the essay already quoted Sidney Lanier goes on to say:

Music is the characteristic art form of the modern time, as sculpture is of the antique and painting is of the medieval time. No one who knows the orchestra well can admit the piano as a final good, but when one thinks of the incalculable service which the piano has rendered in diffusing conceptions of harmony—which is the distinguishing characteristic of modern music—among the masses, one must regard it with reverent affection. Never was any art so completely a household art as is the music of to-day; and the piano has made this possible.

Since Lanier wrote this, the piano has had as great an addition to its realm as Europe had when Columbus annexed a whole hemisphere that had been previously overlooked and unutilized. Appliances have been devised by which the piano's resources are both infinitely enlarged and infinitely popularized.

Formerly there was almost nobody who could play the most difficult compositions. To-day there is nobody who cannot play them, except those who are in hospitals or other public institutions or marooned in some pianoless lodge in a wilderness. Anybody who can pump with a leg and move a lever with a hand, can travel the divine treadmill of good music.

This has not only brought the mountain of piano literature to Mahomet, but has brought all the other peaks in the musical sierra along, too. For it is possible to translate and transcribe and compress the greatest orchestral works into the black and white compass of the piano.

Of course much detail is lost, but so it is in a photograph or a painting of a landscape, where infinite distances of sky and sea and plain are shown in a little frame, and where all things round and hollow, and thin and thick, and deep and shallow are pasted on a flat rag. Thanks to portraiture, of one sort or another, we who have never seen and never shall see Julius Cæsar or Oliver Cromwell, Aaron Burr or Lord Byron, the Czar of Russia or Menelik of Abyssinia, are so familiar with his essential traits that we should instantly recognize him if we met him on Broadway or Euclid Avenue, or wheresoever.

So there are thousands of prisoners in small towns who have never seen a symphonic orchestra and will never live to hear one played, who are yet become so familiar with the transcribed masterpieces of the great composers that they would recognize them in Carnegie Hall or the Auditorium with their eyes shut, while some of us who lean on our eyes too much were trying to read the programme in the dark.

If music was the household art of the nineteenth century, it is becoming the personal art of the twentieth.

Piano-players and reed instruments of the more or less automatic persuasion, have made it possible for the layman to say:

"The music world is my oyster which I with knife will ope."

As the peaceful villager can, through the aid of that pile of stamped paper called a book, sit in his easy chair in Skaneateles and follow Napoleon's mind through its history-making decisions, so he can sit in his chair, run a reel of perforated paper through a music-wringer, and follow the very soul of Beethoven in its immortal meanderings.

He will miss much that enriches actual performance, the epic sonority of the trombones, the violet tones of the violas, the yellow crash of the cornets, and the heart-searching tremors of the violoncello, but he will feel the beauty of the design, and the grace of the melodic profiles, just as the reader of Napoleon's wars sees the hand of the mighty chess player sacrificing a battalion to checkmate a corps, though he may lack the shrieks of the mangled, the thud of the cannons, and the choke of the dust cloud that shows where the hussars are charging.

So, call the automatic harmony "canned music," condensed milk, evaporated cream, or tinned soup, it still has the essence of the original, and it is infinitely more pleasant than dying of starvation.

By all means, eat your oysters fresh from the shell, your lamb with the very mint he has recently nibbled, and your oranges from the bough—if you can. But if you can't, take advantage of the improvements of science.

By all means, hear Richard Strauss conduct his own works, hear Caruso sing *viva voce,* let Paderewski interpret Chopin for you—if you can. But if you can't, don't deny yourself the next best thing. For the next best is usually pretty good.

You cannot pluck wheat in your own field, currants from your own bushes, and cream from your own herd—it is too bad. But still, there's a deal of comfort to be had out of water biscuits with cream cheese and Bar-le-duc jelly, though they have all been prepared by somebody else and bought ready-made.

If you cannot go to symphony concerts and hear seventy-five gentlemen play your music to you under the guidance of a "prima donna conductor," just take home a roll and put it in your own music machine. Better a canned Beethoven than no Beethoven at all.

Symphonies, then, are no longer the exclusive prerogative of princelings, or of dwellers in great cities. Symphonies belong now to the butcher, the baker, and the incandescent lamp maker.

Before playing a symphony, many people are inquisitive enough to ask what a symphony is. In a certain sense this is as baffling as the query of a child as to what God looks like, or what gravity is.

While nobody can really explain a symphony or its power, there are some features that can be roughly defined af-

ter the manner of a dictionary, which is to explain one word by another and so on around the circle.

A symphony, in brief, is a sonata for orchestra.

"But what is a sonata?" somebody asks. Well, a sonata is a lot of things. Literally it is something "sounded." But you might have guessed that yourself. Originally it was anything played instead of sung—anything sung being called a "cantata." Then it came to be used as the general name for a bunch of three, four or five dance tunes of some family resemblance. The dance idea was soon lost and the music became more and more interested in itself, introspective so to speak, the effort being to do as many different things as possible with a musical germ or theme. This type of composition is called "thematic" as opposed to "lyrical." Of this sort were the organ and violin sonatas of Bach, "the father of modern music." His sonatas are the delight of the analytical student, but they are pure Katzenjammer to the laity. The sonatas of Bach's son Carl Philip Emmanuel are much closer akin to the modern spirit.

That gay old fop Haydn, who was the "papa of modern music," was still more lyrical, more full of spirits than of meditation, and is really the father of the modern sonata, and its big brother the symphony.

Haydn was an inveterately cheerful man who let nothing sour him except his wife's temper. His compositions accordingly are full of bonhomie, of delicious grace and contagious cheer. The household of Prince Esterhazy—a very noble name till the Dreyfus Case smirched it—employed Haydn as a sort of musical butler, or chef. He concocted all sorts of musical *entrées, rélèves* and *pièces de résistance,* not to mention a few delightful *hors d'œuvre,* which became *chefs d'œuvre.*

In the course of his musical catering he managed to devise the standard recipes for three of the most important forms of instrumental music, the string quartette, the sonata, and the symphony.

He is given the credit of formulating what has ever since been known as the sonata form. First he took a theme—a rather thoughtful, instrumental theme in a certain key. To this he added another theme—a very lyrical, vocal, song-like theme—in a key that was closely related to the other key, somewhat as cream is related to peaches, or oil to vinegar. Then he stirred these all together, tossed them, twisted them, kneaded and shredded them, and stuffed them full of raisins and spice and everything nice. That part of the sonata is usually called the Development, the Elaboration, or, if you want a fine fat German word to lay out your friends with, call it the *Durchführungssatz,* pronounced more or less "doork-k-h-h-fee-roongk-s-s-zats."

This is the portion in which the technical musician delights, but the laity usually welcomes the concluding portion, or Reprise, in which the first theme is simply and soberly restated in its original key, followed by the second theme in the same key. The whole may be topped off with a Coda, or finale, for good measure.

And all that is only the first movement, or course, of the full dinner known as a sonata. The other movements are supposed to be more or less subtly related to each other, but Mr. Finck aptly if cynically declares that they are as separate as the cars of a train. If that is the case, they at least have the relation of baggage car, smoker, day coach, and—often only too fitly—sleeper.

But be that as it may, the second movement in the symphony is usually much slower than the rest—which mixes up the train metaphor like a thrown switch.

It was Haydn who followed the first movement with this lyrical movement, usually very sad. Beethoven once put a funeral march in this place.

Next came a bright and cheerful movement. At first this was usually a minuet. But the minuet went out of style, and Beethoven substituted a hilarious bit of humor called a Scherzo. Tschaikowski once put a waltz in this place.

The sonata is in either three or four

movements. The last is usually built on the same design as the first, and has the brilliance generally desired for a finale.

This, then, is the sonata. The word is only a general term for an art form. It is just such another term as novel, epic, temple, cottage, or landscape painting. As is the case with these other terms, it has a certain definiteness of meaning and is yet roomy enough to permit all manner of personalities to adapt it to their whims.

Like religious architecture, a sonata may be a Parthenon of purity, or it may be Gothic in nervousness, Renaissance in warmth, or skyscraping in ambition. A sonata, then, is a musical entertainment in three or four chapters.

Now that you know what a sonata is —if you do—you may easily understand what a symphony is. A symphony is a sonata, only much more so. Sonata plus seventy-five equals Symphony.

A sonata is played by a pianist alone, or by a pianist in collaboration with some of the other instruments, such as the violin, which need a piano for foundation. But a symphony is played by an orchestra of from sixty to a hundred highly trained musicians. Beethoven in his Ninth Symphony added soloists and a great chorus of three or four hundred voices.

I remember a novel in which the hero jauntily sat down and played a symphony all by himself. As the English say, that takes a bit of doing. There was a hero as was a hero. His name ought to have been Briareus.

A real symphony is a luxury. In Haydn's day a little nobleman could have a symphony for supper. It took only a squad or two of musicians, and the conductor lent a hand on the violin.

The orchestra which Prince Esterhazy supported for the first symphonies of Haydn contained six violins and violas, a 'cello, a double bass, a flute, two oboes, two bassoons and four pieces of brass, seventeen instruments in all. In a "Requiem Mass," by Hector Berlioz, there are fourteen kettle-drums alone, each tuned to a different tone; while at the Festival of 1882 in New York, Theodore Thomas conducted an orchestra made up of one hundred violins, thirty-six violas, thirty-six 'cellos, forty double basses, six harps, six flutes, two piccolos, seven oboes, two English horns, six clarinets, two bass clarinets, six bassoons, two contra-bassoons, nine horns, two saxhorns, eleven cornets, three trumpets, one brass trumpet, nine trombones, three tubas, eight kettle-drums, two bass drums, two cymbals, three small drums and two triangles—or three hundred and six instruments in all.

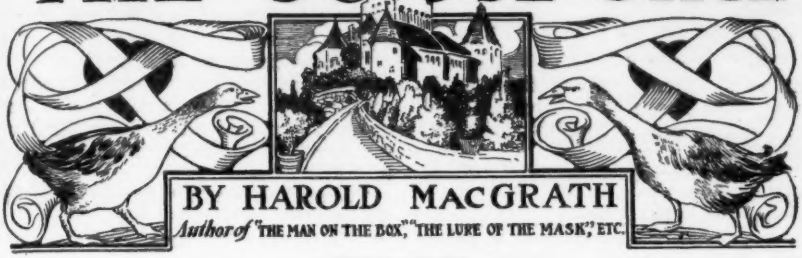
Many new instruments have been invented since Haydn's day, and new appliances devised by which old instruments have enlarged their capabilities immensely. Every year some new invention or some new combination adds a new color to the palette of music.

But let the composer pile on the agony as much as he will, the secret of his success or failure is his original emotional motive, and the power or grace of his design. That will appear in a transcription for the piano or a reed instrument as vividly as the true soul of Raphael or Rubens, of Franz Hals or John Sargent, appears in a photograph of the canvas. Much is lost to him who has never seen the "Mona Lisa" musing on her own canvas, and knows her only from a print; but how much more is lost to him who has never seen even the engraving of her!

Furthermore, the opportunities to hear these works are rare even to those who live in great cities. The man with a music-machine may play the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven every evening of his life. The man who must wait for an orchestra to play it will have the experience of the governors of the Carolinas, and exclaim: "It's a long time between symphonies."

One ought not to deny his life a knowledge of the symphony. It is like never seeing the ocean, never even hearing its echo in a seashell. The great symphonies rank with the great epics and the great dramas.

THE GOOSE GIRL



BY HAROLD MACGRATH

Author of "THE MAN ON THE BOX," "THE LURE OF THE MASK," ETC.

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

The American consul at Dreiberg, capital of Ehrenstein, is Arthur Carmichael. Popular with the grand duke, he is hopelessly in love with the latter's daughter, Princess Hildegarde. She had been kidnaped sixteen years before, but found by the chancellor, Count von Herbeck. The kidnapers are unknown, but the grand duke suspects the late King of Jugendheit. Carmichael befriends a beautiful goose girl, Gretchen, who has been educated by a priest and is in love with a vintner, named Leo. The present King of Jugendheit has proposed for the hand of the princess and the chancellor urges acceptance. A man named Grumbach arrives from America and makes friends with Carmichael; they had both fought in the same campaigns in the Civil War. He confides to the consul that he is really a native of Dreiberg and that there is a price upon his head, but will not tell why. The engagement of the princess to the King of Jugendheit is publicly announced, but later the chancellor is privately informed that the king refuses to marry her, alleging that the proposal was made by his uncle, the prince regent, without his consent. Herbeck does not dare to tell this to the grand duke, fearing that it will lead to war, but he informs the princess, who is rejoiced at the news. An invalid old woman, who lives in the same house with Gretchen, gives the latter a note to the princess. Hildegarde discovers that Gretchen has a voice and offers to have her educated for the Opera. Grumbach sends for one Brenner, the duke's gardener, and discloses himself as his brother—a man suspected of being implicated in the abduction of the princess years before. A report goes abroad, to Gretchen's horror, that the vintner is a spy from Jugendheit. The vintner receives a note which dismays him, and he writes anonymously to Carmichael to be at a certain place and at a certain hour, disguised as a vintner.

CHAPTER XIII.

COLONEL VON WALLENSTEIN curled his mustaches. It was a happy thought that had taken him into the Adlergasse. This Gretchen had been haunting his dreams, and here she was, coming into his very arms, as it were. The sidewalk was very narrow. Gretchen, casually noticing that an officer stood on the sidewalk, sensibly veered into the road. But to her surprise the soldier left the sidewalk and planted himself in the middle of the road. There was no mistaking this second maneuver. The officer, whom she now recognized, was bent on intercepting her. She stopped, a cold fury in her heart. To make sure, she essayed to go round. It was of no use. So she stopped again.

"Herr," she said quietly, "I wish to pass."

"That is possible, Gretchen."

It was nine o'clock in the morning. The Adlergasse was at this time deserted.

"Will you stand aside?"

"You have been haunting my dreams, Gretchen."

"That would be a pity. But I wish to pass."

"Presently. Do you know that you are the most beautiful being in all Dreiberg?"

"I am in a hurry," said Gretchen.

"There is plenty of time."

"Not to listen to foolish speeches."

"I am not going to let you pass till I have had a kiss."

"Ah!" Battle flamed up in Gretchen's eyes. Somewhere in the past, in some remote age, her forebears had been men-at-arms or knights in the crusades.

"You are very hard to please. Some women——"

"But what kind of women?" bitingly. "Not such as I should care to meet. Will you let me by peacefully?"

"After the toll, after the toll!"

Too late she started to run. He laughed and caught hold of her. Slowly but irresistibly he drew her toward his heart. The dead-white of her face should have warned him. With a supreme effort she freed herself and struck him across the face; and there was a man's strength in the flat of her hand. Quick as a flash she whirled round and ran up the street, he hot upon her heels. He was raging now with pain and chagrin. The one hope for Gretchen now lay in the Black Eagle; and into the tavern she darted.

"Frau Bauer," she cried, gasping as much in wrath as for lack of breath, "may I come behind your counter?"

"To be sure, child. Whatever is the matter?"

Wallenstein's entrance was answer sufficient. His hand, held against his stinging cheek, was telltale enough for the proprietress of the Black Eagle.

"Shame!" she cried. She knew her rights. She was not afraid to speak plainly to any officer in the duchy, however high he might be placed.

"I cannot get at you there, Gretchen," said the colonel, giving to his voice that venom which the lady's man always has at hand when thwarted in his gallantries. "You will have to come hence presently."

"She shall stay here all day," declared Frau Bauer decidedly.

"I can wait." The colonel, now possessing two smarts, one to his cheek and one to his vanity, made for the door. But there was a bulk in the doorway formidable enough to be worth serious contemplation.

"What is going on here, little goose-girl?" asked the grizzled old man, folding his arms round his oak staff.

"Herr Colonel insulted me."

"Insulted you?" The colonel laughed boisterously. This was good; an officer insult a wench of this order! "Out of the way!" he snarled at the obstruction in the doorway.

"What did he try to do to you, Gretchen?"

"He tried to kiss me!"

"The man who tries to kiss a woman against her will is always at heart a coward," said the mountaineer.

The colonel seized the old man by the shoulder to push him aside. The other never as much as stirred. He put out one of his arms and clasped the colonel in such a manner that he gasped. He was in the clutch of a Carpathian bear.

"Well, my little soldier?" said the mountaineer, his voice even and not a vein showing in his neck.

"I will kill you for this!" breathed the colonel heavily.

"So?" The old man thrust him back several feet, without any visible exertion. He let his staff slide into his hand.

The moment the colonel felt himself liberated, he drew his saber and lunged toward his assailant. There was murder in his heart. The two women screamed. The old man laughed. He turned the thrust with his staff. The colonel, throwing caution to the four winds, surrendered to his rage. He struck again. The saber rang against the oak. This dexterity with the staff carried no warning to the enraged officer. He struck again and again. Then the old man struck back. The pain in the colonel's arm was excruciating. His saber rattled to the stone flooring. Before he could recover the weapon the victor had put his foot upon it. He was still smiling, as if the whole affair was a bit of pastime.

On his part the colonel's blood suddenly cooled. This was no accident; this meddling peasant had at some time

or other held a saber in his hand and knew how to use it famously well. The colonel realized that he had played the fool nicely.

"My sword," he demanded, with as much dignity as he could muster.

"Will you sheathe it?" the old man asked mildly.

"Since it is of no particular use," bitterly.

"I could have broken it half a dozen times. Here, take it. But be wise in the future, and draw it only in the right."

The gall was bitter on the colonel's tongue, but his head was evenly balanced now. He jammed the blade into the scabbard.

"I should like a word or two with you outside," said the mountaineer.

"To what purpose?"

"To a good one, as you will learn."

The two of them went out. Gretchen, overcome, fell upon Frau Bauer's neck and wept soundly. The whole affair had been so sudden and appalling.

Outside the old man laid his hand on the colonel's arm.

"You must never bother her again."

"Must?"

"The very word. Listen, and do not be a fool because you have some authority on the general staff. You are Colonel von Wallenstein; you are something more besides."

"What do you infer?"

"I infer nothing. Now and then there happens strange leakage in the duke's affairs. The man is well paid. He is a gambler, and one is always reasonably certain that the gambler will be wanting money. Do you begin to understand me, or must I be more explicit?"

"Who are you?"

"Who I am is of no present consequence. But I know who and *what* you are. That is all-sufficient. If you behave yourself in the future, you will be allowed to continue in prosperity. But if you attempt to molest that girl again and I hear of it, there will be no more gold coming over the frontier from Jugendheit. Now, do you understand?"

"Yes." The colonel experienced a weakness in the knees.

"Go. But be advised and walk circumspectly." The speaker showed his back insolently, and reentered the Black Eagle.

The colonel, pale and distrait, stared at the empty door; and he saw in his mind's eye a squad of soldiers, a wall, a single volley, and a dishonored roll of earth. Military informers were given short shrift. It was not a matter of tearing off orders and buttons; it was death. Who was this terrible old man, with the mind of a serpent and the strength of a bear? The colonel went to the barracks, but his usual debonair manner was missing.

"I am going into the garden, Gretchen. Bring me a stein of brown." The mountaineer smiled genially.

"But I am not working here any more," said Gretchen.

"No?"

"She has had a fortune left her," said Frau Bauer.

"Well, well!" The mountaineer seemed vastly pleased. "And how much is this fortune?"

"Two thousand crowns." Gretchen was not sure, but to her there always seemed to be a secret laughter behind those clear eyes.

"Handsome! And what will you do now?"

"She is to study for the Opera."

"Did I not prophesy it?" he cried jubilantly. "Did I not say that some impresario would discover you and make your fortune?"

"There is plenty of work ahead," said Gretchen sagely.

"Always, no matter what we strive for. But a brave heart and a cheerful smile carry you half-way up the hill. Where were you going when this popinjay stopped you?"

"I was going to the clock-mender's for a clock he is repairing."

"I've nothing to do. I'll go with you. I've an idea that I should like to talk with you about a very important matter. Perhaps it would be easier to talk first and then go for the clock. If you

have it you'll be watching it. Will you come into the garden with me now?"

"Yes, herr." Gretchen would have gone anywhere with this strange man. He inspired confidence.

The garden was a snug little place; a few peach-trees and arbor-vines and vegetables, and tables and chairs on the brick walk.

"So you are going to become a prima donna?" he began, seating himself opposite her.

"I am going to try," she smiled. "What is it you wish to say to me?"

"I am wondering how to begin," looking at the blue sky.

"Is it difficult?"

"Yes, very."

"Then why bother?"

"Some things are written before we are born. And I must, in the order of things, read this writing to you."

"Begin," said Gretchen.

"Have you any dreams?"

"Yes," vaguely.

"I mean the kind one has in the daytime, the dreams when the eyes are wide open."

"Oh, yes!"

"Who has not dreamed of riding in carriages, of dressing in silks, of wearing rich ornaments?"

"Ah!" Gretchen clasped her hands and leaned on her elbows. "And there are palaces, too."

"To be sure." There was a long pause. "How would you like a dream of this kind to come true?"

"Do they ever come true?"

"In this particular case, I am a fairy. I know that I do not look it; still, I am. With one touch of my wand—this oak staff—I can bring you all these things you have dreamed about."

"But what would I do with carriages and jewels? I am only a goose-girl, and I am to be married."

"To that young rascal of a vintner?"

"He is not a rascal!" loyally.

"It will take but little to make him one," with an odd grimness.

Gretchen did not understand.

He resumed. "How would you like a little palace, with servants at your beck and call, with carriages to ride in, with silks and velvets to wear, and jewels to adorn your hair? How would you like these things? Eh? Never again to worry about your hands, never again to know the weariness of toil, to be mistress of swans instead of geese?"

A shadow fell upon Gretchen's face; the eagerness died out of her eyes.

"I do not understand you, herr. By what right should I possess these things?"

"By the supreme right of beauty, beauty alone."

"Would it be—honest?"

For the first time he lowered his eyes. The clear crystal spirit in hers embarrassed him.

"Come, let us go for your clock," he said, rising. "I am an old fool. I forgot that one talks like this only to opera-dancers."

Then Gretchen understood. "I am all alone," she said; "I have had to fight my battles with these two hands."

"I am a black devil, *kindchen.* Forget what I have said. You are worthy the brightest crown in Europe; but you wear a better one than that—goodness. If any one should ever make you unhappy, come to me. I will be your godfather. Will you forgive an old man who ought to have known better?"

There was such unmistakable honesty in his face and eyes that she did not hesitate, but placed her hand in his.

"Why did you ask all those questions?"

"Perhaps it was only to test your strength. You are a brave and honest girl."

"And if trouble came," now smiling, "where should I find you?"

"I shall be near when it comes. Good fairies are always close at hand." He swept his hat from his head; there were ease and grace in the movement; no irony, nothing but respect. "And do you love this vintner?"

"With all my heart."

"And he loves you?"

"Yes. His lips might lie, but not his eyes and the touch of his hand."

"So much the worse!" said the mountaineer inaudibly.

Gretchen had gone home with her clock; but still Herr Ludwig, as the mountaineer called himself, tarried in the dim and dusty shop. Clocks, old and new, broken and whole, clocks from the four ends of the world; and watches, thick and clumsy, thin and graceful, of gold and silver and pewter.

"Is there anything you want?" asked the clock-mender.

Herr Ludwig turned. How old this clock-mender was, how very old!

"Yes," he said. "I've a watch I should like you to look over." And he carelessly laid the beautiful time-piece on the worn wooden counter.

The clock-mender literally pounced upon it. "Where did you get a watch like this?" he demanded suspiciously.

"It is mine. You will find my name engraved inside the back lid."

The clock-mender pried open the case, adjusted his glass—and dropped it, shaking with terror.

"You?" he whispered.

"Sh!" said Herr Ludwig, putting a finger to his lips.

CHAPTER XIV.

The watch, slipping from the clock-mender's hand, spun like a coin on the counter, while the clock-mender himself, his eyes bulging, his jaw dangling, it might be said, staggered back upon his stool.

"So this is the end!" he said in a kind of mutter.

"The end of what?" demanded the owner of the watch.

"Of all my labors, to me and to what little I have left!"

"Fiddlesticks! I am here for no purpose regarding you, my comrade. So far as I am concerned, your secret is as dead as it ever was. I had a fancy that you were living in Paris."

"Paris! *Gott!* For seventeen, eighteen years I have traveled hither and thither, always on some false clue. Never a band of gipsies I heard of that I did not seek them out. Nothing, nothing! You will never know what I have gone through, and uselessly, to prove my innocence. It always comes back in a circle; what benefit to me would have been a crime like that of which I was accused? Was I not high in honor? Was I not wealthy? Was not my home life a happy one? What benefit to me, I say?" a growing fierceness in his voice and gestures. "All my estates confiscated, my wife dead of shame, and I molding among these clocks!"

"But why the clocks?" in wonder.

"It was a pastime of mine when I was a boy. I used to be tinkering among all the clocks in the house. So I bought out this old shop. From time to time I have left it in the hands of an assistant. The grand duke has a wonderful Friesian clock. One day it fell out of order, and the court jeweler could do nothing with it. I was summoned, I! No one recognized me, I have changed so. I mended the clock and went away."

"But what is the use of all this, now that her highness is found?"

"My honor; to the duke it is as black as ever."

"Have you gone forward any?"

"Like Sisyphus! I had begun to give up hope, when the gipsy I was seeking was seen by one of my agents. He alone knows the secret. And I am waiting, waiting. But you believe, Ludwig?"

"Carl, you are as innocent as I am or as my brother was. Come with me to Jugendheit."

"No, Ludwig, this is my country, however unjustly it has treated me."

"Yes, yes. And to think that you and I and the grand duke were comrades at Heidelberg! But if your gipsy fails you?"

"Still I shall remain. This will be all I shall have, these clocks. I am only sixty-eight, yet no one would believe me under eighty. I no longer gaze into mirrors. I have forgotten how I look. There were letters found in my desk, all forgeries, I knew, but so cleverly done I could only deny. I saw that my case was hopeless, so I fled to Paris. I wrote Herbeck once while there. He believed that I was innocent. I have his letter yet. He has a great heart,

Ludwig, and he has done splendid work for Ehrenstein."

"He keeps a steady hand on the duke."

"But you, what are you doing in Dreiberg, in this guise?"

Herr Ludwig sat upon the counter and clasped a knee. "Do you care for fairy-stories?"

"Sometimes."

"Well, once upon a time there lived a king. He was young. He had an uncle who watched over him and his affairs. They call such uncles prince regents. This prince regent had an idea regarding the future welfare of this nephew. He would bring him up to be a man, well educated, broad-minded, and clean-lived. He should have a pilot to guide him past the traps and vices which befall the young. Time wore on. The lad grew up, clean in mind, strong in body, liberal; a fine prince. No scandalous entanglements; no gaming, no wine-bibbing beyond what any decent man may do. In his palace few saw anything of him after his fifteenth year. He went into the world under an assumed name. By and by he came home, quietly. His uncle was proud of him, for his eye was clear and his tongue was clean. In one month he was to be coronated. And now what do you think? He must have one more adventure, just one. Would his uncle go with him? Certainly not. Moreover, the time for adventures was over. He must no longer wander about; he was a king; he must put his hand to kingcraft. And one morning his uncle found him gone, gone as completely as if he had never existed. What to do? Ah! The prince regent set it going that his majesty had gone a-hunting in Bavaria. Then the prince regent put on some old clothes and went a-venturing himself."

"And the end?"

"God knows!" said Ludwig.

Nothing but the ticking of the clocks was heard.

"And fatuous fool that this uncle was, he committed an almost irreparable blunder. He tried to marry his nephew."

"I understand. But if you are discovered here?"

"That is not likely."

"Ah, Ludwig, it is not the expected that always happens. Be careful; you know the full wording of Herbeck's treaty."

"Herbeck; there's a man," said Herr Ludwig admiringly. "To have found her highness as he did!"

"He is lucky," but without resentment.

The other picked up his watch. "Can I be of material assistance?"

"I want nothing," haughtily.

"Proud old imbecile!" replied the mountaineer kindly. "You have been deeply wronged, but some day you will pick up the thread in the labyrinth, and there will be light forward. I myself will see what can be done with the duke."

"He will never be brought to reason unless indubitable evidence of my innocence confronts him. With the restoration of the princess fifty political prisoners were given their liberty and restored to citizenship. The place once occupied by my name is still blank, obliterated. It is hard. I have given the best of my heart and brain to Ehrenstein—for this! I am innocent."

"I believe you, Carl. Remember, Jugendheit will always welcome you. I must be going. I have much to do between now and midnight. The good God will unravel the snarl."

"Or forget it," cynically. "Good-by, Ludwig."

There was a hand-clasp, and the mountaineer took himself off. The clock-mender philosophically reached for his tools. He had wasted time enough over retrospection; he determined to occupy himself with the present only. Tick-tock! Tick-tock! sang the clocks about him. All at once a volume of musical sounds broke forth; cuckoo-calls, chimes, tinkles light and thin, booms deep and vibrant. But the clock-mender bent over his work; all he was conscious of was the eternal tick-tock! tick-tock! on and on, without cessation.

Carmichael walked his horse. This morning he had ridden out almost to the frontier and was now on his return. As he passed through the last grove of pines and came into the clearing the picture was exquisite; the three majestic bergs of ice and snow above Dreiberg, the city shining white and fairy-like in the mid-morning's sun, and the long, half-circling ribbon of a road. He sighed, and the horse cocked his ears at the sound.

No longer did Carmichael take the south pass for his morning rides. That was the favored going of her highness, and he avoided her now. In truth, he dared not meet her now; it would have been out of wisdom. So long as she had been free his presence had caused no comment, only tolerant amusement among the nobles at court. It chafed him to be regarded as a harmless individual, for he knew that he was far from being in that class. There was a wild strain in him. Dreiberg might have waked up some fine morning to learn that for a second time her princess had been stolen, and that there was a vacancy in the American consulate. How many times had he been seized with the mad desire to snatch the bridle of her horse and ride away with her into a far country! How often had his arms started out toward her, only to drop stiffly to his sides!

March hares! They were Solons as compared with his own futile madness. But it was different now. She was to marry the King of Jugendheit; it was in the order of things that he ride alone. He knew that court etiquette demanded the isolation of the Princess Hildegarde from male escort other than that formally provided. The two soldiers detailed to act as her grooms or body-guards were not, of course, to be considered.

The road to Eissen began about six miles north of the base of the Dreiberg mountain. It swerved to the east. As Carmichael reached the fork his horse began to limp. He jumped down and removed the stone. It was then that he heard the far-off mutter of hoofs. Coming along the road from Eissen were a trio of riders. Carmichael laughed weakly.

"I swear to Heaven that this is no fault of mine!"

Should he mount and be off before she made the turn? Bah! It was an accident; he would make the most of it. The body-guard could easily vindicate him in any event. He remounted and waited.

She came in full flight, rosy, radiant, as lovely as Diana. Carmichael swung his cap boyishly; and there was a swirl of dust as she drew up.

"Good morning, Herr Carmichael!"

"Good morning, your highness!"

"Which way have you been riding?"

"Toward Jugendheit."

"And you are returning?" With a short nod of her head she signaled for the two soldiers to fall back.

The two looked at each other embarrassedly.

"Pardon, highness," said one of them, "but the orders of the duke will not permit us to leave you. There have been thieves along the road of late."

Thieves? This was the first time Carmichael had heard of it. The real significance of the maneuver escaped him; but her highness was not fooled.

"Very well," she replied. "One of you ride forward and one of you take the rear." Then she spoke to Carmichael in English.

The soldiers shrugged. To them it did not matter what language her highness adopted so long as they obeyed the letter of the duke's instructions. The little cavalcade directed its course toward the city.

"You have not been riding of late," she said.

Then she had missed him? Carmichael's heart expanded. To be missed is to be regretted, and one regrets only those in whom one is interested.

"I have ridden the same as usual, your highness; only I have taken this road for a change."

"Ah!" She patted the glistening neck of her mare. So he had purposely tried to avoid her? Why? She stole a sly glance at him. Why were not kings molded in this form? All the

kings she had met had something the matter with them, crooked legs, weak eyes, bald, young, or old, and daft over gaming-tables and opera-dancers. And the one man among them all—at least she had been informed that the King of Jugendheit was all of a man—had politely declined. There was some chagrin in this for her, but no bitterness or rancor. In truth, she was more chagrined on her father's account than on her own.

"You should have taken the south pass. It was lovely yesterday."

"Perhaps this way has been wisest."

"Are you become afraid of me?" archly.

"Yes, your highness." If he had looked at her instead of his horse's ears, and smiled, all would have been well.

She instantly regretted the question. "I am sorry that I have become an ogress."

"To me your highness is the most perfect of women. I am guilty of lese-majesty."

"I shall not lock you up," she said, and added under her breath: "As my good father would like to! Besides," she continued aloud, "I rather like to set the court by the ears. Whoever heard of a serene highness doing the things I do? I suppose it is because I have known years of freedom, freedom of action, of thought, of speech. These habits cannot change at once. In fact, I do not believe they ever will. But the duke my father is good; he understands and trusts me. Ah, but I shall lead some king a merry life!" with a wicked gleam in her eyes.

"Frederick of Jugendheit?"

"It is true that you have not heard yet. I have declined the honor."

"Your highness?"

"My serene highness," with a smile. "This, of course, is as yet a state secret; and my reason for telling you is not a princess', but a woman's. Solve it if you can."

Carmichael fumbled the reins blindly. "They say that he is a handsome young man."

"What has that to do with it? The interest he takes in his kingdom is positively negative. I have learned that he has been to his capital but twice since he was fifteen. He is even now absent on a hunting trip in Bavaria, and his coronation but a few days off. There will be only one king in Jugendheit, and that will be the prince regent."

"He has done tolerably well up to the present," observed Carmichael, welcoming this change. "Jugendheit is prosperous; it has a splendid army. The prince regent is a fine type of man, they say, rugged, patient, frugal, and sensible."

"There is an instance where he made a cruel blunder."

"No man is infallible," said he, wondering what this blunder was.

"I suppose not. Look! The artillery is firing."

Boom-boom! They saw the smoke leap from the muzzles of the cannon, and it seemed minutes before the sound reached them.

"I have a fine country, too," she said, with pride; "prosperous, and an army not inferior to that of Jugendheit."

"I was not making comparisons, your highness."

"I know that, my friend. I was simply speaking from the heart. But I doubt if the prince regent is a better man than our Herbeck."

"I prefer Herbeck, never having met the prince regent. But I have some news for your highness."

"News for me?"

"Yes. I am about to ask for my recall," he said, the idea having come into his mind at that precise moment.

"Your recall?"

Had he been looking at her he would have noticed that the color on her fair cheeks had gone a shade lighter.

"Yes."

"Is not this sudden? It is not very complimentary to Ehrenstein."

"The happiest days in my life have been spent here."

"Then why seek to be recalled?"

"I am essentially a man of action, your highness. I am growing dull and stupid amid these charming pleasures. Action; I have always been mixed up in some trouble or other. Here it is a

round of pleasure from day to day. I long for buffets. I am wicked enough to wish for war."

"*Cherchez la femme!*" she cried. "There is a woman?"

"Oh, yes!" recklessly.

"Then go to her, my friend, go to her." And she waved her crop over his head as in benediction. "Some day, before you go, I shall ask you all about her." Ah, as if she did not know! But half the charm in life is playing with hidden dangers.

He did not speak, but caught up the reins firmly. She touched her mare on the flank, and the four began trotting, a pace which they maintained as far as the military field. Here they paused, for the scene was animated and full of color. Squadrons of cavalry raced across the field; infantry closed in or deployed; artillery rumbled, wheeled, stopped, unlimbered. Bang-bang! The earth shivered and rocked. Guerdons were flying, bugles were blowing, and sabers were flashing.

"It is beautiful," she cried, "this mimic war."

"May your highness never see aught else!" he replied fervently.

"Yes, yes; you have seen it divested of all its pomp. You have seen it in all its cruelty and horror."

"I have known even the terror of it."

"You were afraid?"

"Many times."

She laughed. It was only the coward who denied fear.

He would certainly ask for his recall or transfer. He was eating his heart out here in Dreiberg.

They began the incline. She did most of the talking, brightly and gaily; but his ears were dull, for the undercurrent passed by him. He was, for the first time, impressed with the fact that the young ladies of the court never accompanied her on her morning rides. There were frequent afternoon excursions, when several ladies and gentlemen rode with her highness, but in the mornings, never.

"Will you return to America?" she queried.

"I shall idle in Paris for a while. I have an idea that there will be war one of these days."

"And which side will you take?"

"I should be a traitor if I fought for France; I should be an ingrate if I fought against her. I should be a spectator, a neutral."

"That would expose you to danger without the right to strike a blow in defense."

"If I were hurt it would be but an accident. War-correspondents would run a hundred more risks than I. Oh, I should be careful; I know war too well not to be."

"All this is strange talk for a man who is a confessed lover."

"Pardon me!" his eyes rather empty.

"Why, you tell me there is a woman; and all your talk is about war and danger. These are opposites; please explain."

"There is a woman, but she will not hinder me in any way. She will, in fact, know nothing about it."

"You are a strange lover. I never read anything like you in story-books. Forgive me! I am thoughtless. The subject may be painful to you."

The horses began to pull. Under normal circumstances Carmichael would not have dismounted, but his horse had carried him many miles that morning, and he was a merciful rider. In the war days often had his life depended upon the care of his horse.

"You have been riding hard?"

"No, only far."

"I do not believe that there is a finer horseman in all Ehrenstein than yourself."

"Your highness is very good to say that." Why had he not gone on instead of waiting at the fork?

Within a few hundred yards of the gates he mounted again. And then he saw the lonely figure sitting on the parapet. He would have recognized that square form anywhere. And he welcomed the sight of it.

"Your highness, do you see that man yonder, on the parapet? He fought in the same cavalry as myself. He is covered with scars. Not one man in a

thousand would have gone through what he did and lived."

"Is he an American?"

"By adoption. And may I ask a favor of your highness?"

"Two!" merrily.

"May I present him? It will be the joy of his life."

"Certainly. All brave men interest me."

Grumbach rose up, uncovered, thinking that the riders were going to pass him. But to his surprise his friend Carmichael stopped his horse and beckoned to him.

"Herr Grumbach," said Carmichael, "her serene highness desires me to present you."

Hans was stricken dumb. He knew of no greater honor.

"Mr. Carmichael," she said in English, "tells me that you fought with him in the American war?"

"Yes, highness."

She plied him with a number of questions; how many battles had they fought in, how many times they had been wounded, how they lived in camp, and so forth; and which was the most powerful engine of war, the infantry or the cavalry.

"The cavalry, highness," said Hans, without hesitation.

She laughed. "If you had been a foot-soldier, you would have said the infantry; of the artillery, you would have sworn by the cannon."

"That is true, highness. The three arms are necessary, but there is ever the individual pride in the arm one serves in."

"And that is right. You speak good English," she remarked.

"I have lived more than sixteen years in America, highness."

"Do you like it there?"

"It is a great country, full of great ideas and great men, highness."

"And you will go back?"

"Soon, highness."

The mare, knowing that this was the way home, grew restive and began prancing and pawing the road. She reined in quickly. As she did so, something yellow flashed downward and tinkled as it struck the ground. Grumbach hastened forward.

"My locket," said her highness anxiously.

"It is not broken, highness," said Grumbach; "only the chain has come apart." Then he handed it to her gravely.

"Thank you!" Her highness put both chain and locket into a small purse which she carried in her belt, touched the mare, and sped up the road, Carmichael following.

Grumbach returned to the parapet. He followed them till they passed out of sight beyond the gates.

"*Gott!*" he murmured.

His face was as livid as the scar on his head.

CHAPTER XV.

Herbeck dropped his quill, and there was a dream in his eyes. His desk was littered with papers, well covered with ink; flowing sentences, and innumerable figures. He was the watch-dog of the duchy. Never a bill from the Reichstag that did not pass under his cold eye before it went to the duke for his signature, his approval, or veto. Not a copper was needlessly wasted, and never was one held back unnecessarily. Herbeck was just both in great and little things. The commoners could neither fool nor browbeat him.

The dream in his eyes grew; it was tender and kindly. The bar of sunlight lengthened across his desk, and finally passed on. Still he sat there, motionless, rapt. And thus the duke found him. But there was no dream in *his* eyes; they were cold with implacable anger. He held a letter in his hand and he tossed it to Herbeck.

"I shall throw ten thousand men across the frontier to-night, let the consequences be what they may."

"Ten thousand men?" The dream was shattered. War again?

"Read that. It is the second anonymous communication I have received within a week. As the first was truthful, there is no reason to believe this one to be false."

Herbeck read, and he was genuinely startled.

"What do you say to that?" triumphantly.

"This," with that rapid decision which made him the really great tactician he was. "Let them go quietly back to Jugendheit."

"No!" blazed the duke.

"Are we rich enough for war?"

"Always questions, questions! What the devil is my army for if not to uphold my dignity? Herbeck, you shall not argue me out of this."

"Rather let me reason. This is some prank, which I am sure does not concern Ehrenstein in the least. They would never dare enter Dreiberg for aught else. There must be a flaw in our secret service."

"Doubtless."

"I have seen this writing before," said Herbeck. "I shall make it my business to inquire who it is that takes this kindly interest in the affairs of state."

The duke struck the bell violently.

"Summon the chief of the police," he said to the secretary.

"Yes, yes, your highness, let it be a police affair. This letter does not state the why and wherefor of their presence here."

"It holds enough for me."

"Will your highness leave the matter in my hands?"

"Herbeck, in some things you are weak."

"And in others I am strong," smiled the chancellor. "I am weak when there is talk of war; I am strong when peace is in the balance."

"Is it possible, Herbeck, that you do not appreciate the magnitude of the situation?"

"It is precisely because I do that I wish to move slowly. Wait. Let the police find out *why* they are here. There will be time enough then to declare war. They have never seen her highness. Who knows?"

"Ah! But they have violated the treaty."

"That depends upon whether their presence here is or is not a menace to the state. If they are here on private concerns which in no wise touch Ehrenstein, it would be foolhardy to declare war. Your highness is always letting your personal wounds blur your eyesight. Some day you will find that Jugendheit is innocent."

"God hasten the day and hour!"

"Yes, let us hope that the mystery of it all will be cleared up. You are just and patient in everything but this." Herbeck idled with his quill. The little finger of his right hand was badly scarred, the mutilation of a fencing-bout in his student days.

"What do you advise?" wearily. It seemed to the duke that Herbeck of late never agreed with him.

"My advice is to wait. In a day or so arrest them under the pretext that you believe them to be spies. If they remain mute, then the case is serious, and you will have them on the hip. If, on the other hand, this invasion is harmless and they declare themselves, the matter can be adjusted in this wise; ignore their declaration and confine them a day or two in the city prison, then publish the news broadcast. Having themselves broken the letter if not the spirit of the treaty, they will not dare declare war. Every court in Europe will laugh."

The duke struck his hands together. "You are always right, Herbeck. This plan could not have been devised better or more to my satisfaction." The duke laughed. "You are right. Ah, here is the chief."

Herbeck read the letter in part to the chief, who jotted down the words, repeating aloud in a kind of mutter: "A mountaineer, a vintner, a carter, a butcher, and a baker. You will give me their descriptions, your excellency."

Herbeck read the postscript.

"But you don't tell him who——"

"Why should he know?" said Herbeck, glancing shrewdly at the duke. "His ignorance will be all the better for the plot."

"Then this is big game, your highness?" asked the chief.

"Big game."

"One is as big and powerful as a

Carpathian bear. Look out," warned Herbeck.

"And he is?"

"The mountaineer."

"And the vintner?"

"Oh, he is a little fellow, and hasn't grown his bite yet," said Herbeck dryly.

The duke laughed again. It would be as good as a play.

"I thank you, Herbeck. You have neatly arranged a fine comedy. I do not think so clearly as I used to. When the arrest is made, give it as much publicity as possible. Take a squad of soldiers; it will give it a military look. Will you be on the field this afternoon?"

"No, your highness," touching the papers which strewed his desk; "this will keep me busy well into evening."

The duke waved his hand cheerfully and left the cabinet.

"Your excellency, then, really leaves me to work in the dark?" asked the chief uneasily.

"Yes," tearing up the note. "But you will not be in the dark long after you have arrested these persons. Begin with the mountaineer and the vintner; the others do not matter so much." Then Herbeck laughed. The chief raised his head. He had not heard his excellency laugh like that in many moons. "Report to me your progress. Unfortunately my informant does not state where these fellows are to be found."

"That is my business, your excellency."

"Good luck to you!" responded Herbeck, with a gesture of dismissal.

When her highness came in from her morning's ride she found the duke waiting in her apartments.

"Why, father," kissing him, "what brings you here?"

"A little idea I have in mind." He drew her down to the arm of the chair. "We all have our little day-dreams."

"Who does not, father?" She slid her arm round his neck. She was full of affection for this kindly parent.

"But there are those of us who must not accept day-dreams as realities; for then there will be heartaches and futile longings."

"You are warning me. About what, father?" There was a little stab in her heart.

"Herr Carmichael is a fine fellow, brave, witty, shrewd. If all Americans are like him, America will soon become a force in the world. I have taken a fancy to him; and you know what they say of your father—no formality with those whom he likes. Humanly, I am right; but in the virtue of every-day events in court life, I am wrong."

She moved uneasily.

He went on: "Herbeck has spoken of it, the older women speak of it; and they all say——"

"Say!" she cried hotly, leaping to her feet. "What do I care what they say? Are you not the grand duke, and am I not your daughter?"

In his turn the duke felt the stab.

"You must ride no more with Herr Carmichael. It is neither wise nor safe."

"Father!"

He was up, with his arms folding round her. "Child, it is only for your sake. Listen to me. I married your mother because I loved her and she loved me. The case is isolated, rare, out of the beaten path in the affairs of rulers. But you, you must be a princess. You must steel your heart against the invasion of love, unless it comes from a state equal or superior to your own. It is harsh and cruel, but it is a law that will neither bend nor break. Do you understand me?"

The girl stared blindly at the wall. "Yes, father."

"It is all my fault," said the duke, deeply agitated, for the girl trembled under his touch.

"I will not ride with him any more."

"There's a good girl," patting her shoulder.

"I have been a princess such a little while."

He kissed the wheaten-colored hair. "Be a brave heart, and I will engage to find a king for you."

"I don't want any playthings father," with the old light touch; and then

she looked him full in the eyes. "I promise to do nothing more to create comment if, on the other hand, you will promise to give me two years more of freedom."

The duke readily assented, and shortly returned to his own suite, rather pleased that there had been no scene; not that he had expected any.

Meantime the chief of police called his subaltern and placed in his hands the peculiar descriptions. The word vintner caused him to give vent to an ejaculation of surprise.

"He was in here last night. I have had him followed all day. He lives over the American consulate. Among his things was found the uniform of a colonel in the Prussian Uhlans."

"Ha! Arrest him to-morrow, or the day after at the latest. But the mountaineer is the big game. Do not arrest the vintner till you have him. Where one is the other is likely to be. But on the moment of arrest you must have a squad of soldiers at your back."

"Soldiers?" doubtfully.

"Express orders of his highness."

"It shall be done."

Considerable activity was manifest in the police-bureau the rest of that day.

To return to Carmichael. He had never before concerned himself with resignations. Up to this hour he had never resigned anything he had set his heart upon. So it was not an easy matter for him to compose a letter to the secretary of state, resigning the post at Dreiberg. True, he added that he desired to be transferred to a seaport town, France or Italy preferred. The high altitude in Dreiberg had affected his heart. However, in case there was no other available post, they would kindly appoint his successor at once. Carmichael never faltered where his courage was concerned, and it needed a fine quality of moral courage to write this letter and enclose it in the diplomatic pouch which went into the mails that night. It took courage indeed to face the matter squarely and resolutely, when there was the urging desire to linger on and on, indefinitely. That she was not going to marry the King of Jugendheit did not alter his affairs in the least. It was all hopeless, absurd, and impossible. He must go.

Some one was knocking on the door.

"Come in."

"A letter for your excellency," said the concierge.

"Wait till I read it. There may be an answer."

If Herr Carmichael would learn the secret of Number Forty Krumerweg, let him attire himself as a vintner and be in the Krumerweg at eight o'clock to-night.

This note was as welcome to the recipient as the flowers in the spring. An adventure? He was ready, now and always. Anything to take his mind off his own dismal affairs. Then he recalled the woman in black; the letter could apply to none but her. More than this, he might light upon the puzzle regarding the vintner. He had met the fellow before. But where?

"What sort of clothes does a vintner wear?" he asked.

"A vintner, your excellency?"

"Yes. I shall need the costume of a vintner this evening."

"Oh, that will be easy," affirmed the concierge, "if your excellency does not mind wearing clothes that have already been worn."

"My excellency will not care a hang. Procure them as soon as you can."

So it came about that Carmichael, dressed as a vintner, his hat over his eyes, stole into the misty night and took the way to the Krumerweg. He knew exactly where he wished to go; number forty. It was gray-black in the small streets; and but for the occasional light in a window the dark would have had no modification. Sometimes he would lose the point of the compass and blunder against a wall or find himself feeling for the curb, hesitant of foot. The wayside shrine was a rift in the gloom, and he knew that he had only a few more steps to take. After all, who was the lady in black and why should he bother himself about her? She probably came from the back stairs of the palace. And yet, the chancellor himself had been in this place. What should he do? Should he wait across the

street? Should he knock at the door and ask to be admitted? No; he must skulk in the dark, on the opposite side. He picked his way over the street and stood for a moment in the denser black.

A step? He trained his ear. But even as he did so his arms were grasped firmly and twisted behind his back, and at the same time a cloth was wrapped round the lower part of his face, leaving only his eyes and nose visible. It was all so sudden and unexpected that he was passive the first few seconds; after that there was some scuffling, strenuous, too. He was fighting against three. Desperately he surged this way and that. Even in the heat of battle he wondered a little why no one struck him; they simply clung to him, and at length he could not move. His hands were tied, not roughly but surely. In all this commotion, not a whisper, not a voice; only heavy breathing.

Then one of the three whistled. A minute or two after a closed carriage came into the Krumerweg, and Carmichael was literally bundled inside. His feet were now bound. Two of his captors sat on the forward seat, while the third joined the driver. Carmichael could distinguish nothing but outlines and shadows. He choked, for he was furious. To be trussed like this, without any explanation whatever! What the devil was going on? Unanswered.

The carriage began to move slowly. It had to; swift driving in the Krumerweg was hardly possible and at no time safe. Carmichael set himself to note the turns of the street. One turn after another he counted, fixing as well as he could the topography of the town through which they were passing. At last he realized that they were leaving Dreiberg behind and were going down the mountain on the north side, toward Jugendheit. Once the level road was reached, a fast pace was set and maintained for miles. At the Ehrenstein barrier no question was asked, and Carmichael's one hope was shattered. At the Jugendheit barrier the carriage stopped. There were voices. Carmichael saw the flicker of a lantern. His captors got out. Presently there appeared at the door an old man dressed as a mountaineer. In his hand was the lantern.

"Pardon me, dear nephew—— Fools!" he broke off, swinging round. "He has tricked you all. This is not *he!*"

Three astonished faces peered over the old man's shoulder. Carmichael eyed them evilly. He now saw that one was a carter, another a butcher, and the third a baker. He had seen them before, in the Black Eagle. But this signified nothing.

"Untie him and take off that rag. It may be Scharfenstein." The old man possessed authority.

Carmichael, freed, stretched himself.

"Well?" he said, with a dangerous quiet.

"Herr Carmichael, the American consul!" The old man nearly dropped the lantern. "Oh, you infernal blockheads!"

"Explanations are in order," suggested Carmichael.

"You are offered a thousand apologies for a stupid mistake. Now, may I ask how you came to be dressed in these clothes on this particular night?"

Carmichael's anger dissolved, and he laughed. All the mystery was gone with the abruptness of a mist under the first glare of the sun. He saw how neatly he had been duped. He still carried the note. This he gave to the leader of this midnight expedition.

"Humph!" said the old man in a growl. "I thought as much." He whispered to his companions. "Herr Carmichael, I shall have the honor of escorting you back to Dreiberg."

"But will it be as easy to go in as it was to come out?"

"Trust you for that. The American consul's word will be sufficient for our needs."

"And if I refuse to give that word?"

"In that case, you will have to use your legs," curtly.

"I prefer to ride."

"Thanks: I shall sit with the driver."

"That also will please me."

"And you ask no further questions?"

"Why should I? I know all I wish to know, which is more than you would care to have me."

The mountaineer swore.

"If we talk any longer I shall be late for breakfast."

"Forward, then!"

On the way, it all came back to Carmichael with the vividness of a forgotten photograph, come upon suddenly: Bonn, the Rhine, swift and turbulent, a tow-headed young fellow who could not swim well, his own plunge, his fingers in the flaxen hair, and the hard fight to the landing; all this was a tale twice told.

Vintner? Not much!

CHAPTER XVI.

It was dawn when they began to pull up the road to Dreiberg. The return had been leisurely despite Carmichael's impatience. In the military field the troops were breaking camp for their departure to the various posts throughout the duchy. Only the officers, who were to attend the court ball that evening, and the resident troops would remain. The maneuvers were over; the pomp of miniature war was done.

The carriage stopped.

"I shall not intrude, I trust?" said the old man, opening the door and getting in.

"Not now," replied Carmichael. "What is all this about?"

"A trifle; I might say a damfool trifle. But what did you mean when you said you knew all you wanted to know?" The mountaineer showed some anxiety.

"Exactly what I said. The only thing that confuses me is the motive."

The old man thought for a while. "Supposing you had a son who was making a fool of himself?"

"Or a nephew?"

"Well, or a nephew."

"Making a fool of himself over what?"

"A woman."

"Nothing unusual in that. But what kind of a woman?"

"A good woman, honest, too good by far for any man."

"Oh!"

"Supposing she was vastly his inferior in station, that marriage to him was merely a political contract? What would you do?"

"I believe I begin to understand."

"I am grateful for that."

"But the risks you run!"

"I believed them all over last night."

"But you would dare handle him in this way?"

"When the devil drives, my friend!" The other smiled. "I was born in the heart of a war. I have taken so many risks that the sense of danger no longer has a keen edge. But now that you understand, I am sure a soldier like yourself will pardon the blunder of last night."

"Your nephew is an ungrateful wretch."

"What?" coldly.

"He knew all along who I was. I dragged him out of the Rhine upon a certain day, and he plays this trick!"

"You? Carmichael, Carmichael; of course; I should have remembered the name, as he wrote me at the time. Thank you! And you knew him all the while?"

"No; I recalled his face, but the time and place were in the dark till this early morning. Here we are at the gates. What's this? Guards? I never saw them at these gates before."

"You will make yourself known to them?"

"Yes. But if they question me?"

"Wink. Every soldier knows what that means."

"When a fellow turns in early in the morning?" Carmichael laughed hilariously.

"I ask you frankly not to let them question me. When I left the city last night I never expected to return."

"I'll do what I can."

Carmichael bared his head and leaned out of the window. He recognized one of the guards. A policeman in military uniform!

"Good morning!" said Carmichael.

"Herr Carmichael?" surprised. "Your excellency?"

"Yes. I've been having a little junket, I and my friend here." And Carmichael winked.

"Ah!"

"But what——"

"Sh! Very important affair," said the disguised officer. "Go on."

But after the carriage had passed it occurred to him that Carmichael wore a dress like a vintner's and that his friend was a mountaineer! *Du lieber Himmel!* What kind of a mix-up was this? The chancellor never could have meant Carmichael!

"Thanks!" whispered the old man.

"Did you see the soldier?"

"Yes."

"He is one of the police in disguise. Be on your guard. If you don't mind I'll use this carriage to the hotel."

"You are a thousand times welcome. I will leave you here. And take the advice of an old man who has seen the four sides of humanity; leave falling in love to poets and to fools!"

The mountaineer got out quickly, closed the door, spoke a word to the driver, and slipped into an alleyway.

Carmichael arrived at the Grand Hotel in time to see her serene highness, accompanied by two of her ladies and an escort of four soldiers, start out for her morning ride. The zest of his own strange adventure died. He waited till they had passed, then slunk into the hotel. The concierge gazed at him in amazement. Carmichael winked. The concierge smiled. He understood. *Americaner* or *Ehrensteiner,* the young fellows were all the same.

"Police at the gates," mused Carmichael, as he soaked his head and face in cold water. "By George, it looks as if my friend the vintner was in for some excitement! Far be it that I should warn him. He had his little joke; I can wait for mine."

Gretchen! Carmichael stopped, his collar but half-way around his throat. Gretchen, brave, kindly, beautiful Gretchen! Now, by the Lord, that should not be! He would wring the vintner's neck. He snapped the collar viciously. He was not in an amiable mood this fair September morning. And when some one hammered on the door he called sharply.

Grumbach entered.

"You are angry about something," he said.

"So I am, but you are always welcome."

"You have overslept?"

"No; on the contrary."

"Poker?"

"After a fashion," said Carmichael, the grumble gone from his voice. "I was beaten by three of a kind."

"So?"

"But I found a good hand later."

"What?"

"Kings."

"Four?"

"Oh, no; only one. I haven't drawn yet."

"You are not telling me all."

"No. You are going to the ball tonight?"

"I would not miss it for five thousand crowns," sadly.

"You look as if you were going to a funeral instead of the greatest event of the year in Dreiberg."

"I didn't sleep well either."

"Out?"

"No; one does not have to go out in order not to sleep."

"I'd like to know what's going on in that bullet-head of yours."

"Nothing is going on; everything has stopped."

"Can't you make a confidant of me, Hans?"

"Not yet, captain."

"When you are ready it may be too late. I leave Dreiberg for good in a few weeks."

"No!" For the first time Grumbach showed interest.

"I have resigned the consulship."

"And for what reason?"

Carmichael silently drew on his coat.

"*Ach!* So you have one, too?"

"One what?"

"One secret."

"Yes. But it's the kind we can't talk about."

"I understand."

There was a large crowd outside the

palace that night, which was clear and starry. A troop of cavalry patrolled the fence. Carriage after carriage rolled in through the gates, coming directly from the Opera. It was eleven o'clock. All the great in the duchy were on hand to-night. Often a cheer rose from the ranks of the outsiders as some popular general or some famous beauty passed. It was an orderly crowd, jostling and good-natured, held only by curiosity. Every window in the palace presented a glowing square of light; and beams crisscrossed the emerald lawns and died in the arms of the lurking shadows. The gardens were illuminated besides. It was fairy-land.

Carmichael was naturally democratic. To ride a block in a carriage was to him a waste of time. And he rather liked to shoulder into a press. With the aid of his cane and a frequent push of the elbow he worked his way to the gates. And close by the sentry-box he saw Gretchen and her vintner. Carmichael could not resist stopping a moment. He raised his hat to Gretchen, to the wonder of those nearest. The vintner would have gladly disappeared, but the human wall behind made this impossible. But he was needlessly alarmed. Carmichael only smiled ironically.

"Do you know where the American consulate is?" he asked low, so that none but Gretchen and the vintner heard.

"Yes," said the vintner, blushing with shame. "I live above the agency."

"Good! I shall expect to see you in the morning."

But the vintner was determined that he shouldn't. He would be at work in the royal vineyards on the morrow.

"To-morrow?" repeated Gretchen, to whom this by-play was a blank. "Why should he wish to see you?"

"Who knows? Let us be going. They are pressing us too close to the gates."

"Very well," acquiesced Gretchen, somewhat disappointed. She wanted to see all there was to be seen.

"It is half-after ten," he added, as if to put forward some logical excuse for leaving at this moment.

A man followed them all the way to the Krumerweg.

Carmichael threw himself eagerly into the gaiety of the dance. Never had he seen the ballroom so brilliant with color. Among all those there his was the one somber dress.

He was an accomplished waltzer, after the manner of that day, when one went round and round like some mechanical toy wound up. Strauss and Waldteufel tingled his feet; and he whirled ambassadors' wives till they were breathless and ambassadors' daughters till they no longer knew or cared where they were. He was full of subtle deviltry this night, with an undercurrent of malice toward every one and himself in particular. This would be the last affair of the kind for him, and he wanted a full memory of it. Between times he exchanged a jest or two with the chancellor or talked battles with old Ducwitz; twice he caught the grand duke's eye, but there was only a friendly nod from that august personage, no invitation to talk. Thrice, while on the floor, her highness passed him; but there was never a smile, never a glance. He became careless and reckless. He would seek her and talk to her and smile at her even if the duke threw a regiment in between. The Irish blood in him burned to-night, capable of any folly.

He no longer danced. He waited and watched; and it was during one of these waits that he saw Grumbach in the gallery.

"Now, what the devil is the Dutchman doing with a pair of opera-glasses!"

It required some time and patience to discover the object of this singular attention on the part of Grumbach. Carmichael was finally convinced that this object was no less a person than her serene highness!

Later her highness stood before one of the long windows in the conservatory, listlessly watching the people in the square. And these poor fools envied her! To envy her, who was a

prisoner, a chattel to be exchanged for war's immunity, who was a princess in name but a cipher in fact! All was wrong with the world. She had stolen out of the ballroom; the craving to be alone had been too strong. Little she cared whether they missed her or not. She left the window and sat on one of the divans, idly opening and shutting her fan. Was that some one coming for her? She turned.

It was Carmichael.

What an opportunity for scandal! she laughed inwardly. The barons and their wives, the ambassadors' wives and their daughters, would miss them both. And the spirit of deviltry lay also upon her heart. She smiled at the man and with her fan bade him be seated at her side. The divinity that hedges in a king did not bother either of them just then.

"You have not asked me to dance tonight," she declared.

"I know it."

"Why?"

"I am neither a prince nor an ambassador."

"But you *have* danced with me."

"Yes; I have been to heaven now and then."

"And do you eject yourself thus easily?"

"By turning myself out my self-esteem remains unruffled."

"Then you expected to be turned out?"

"Sooner or later."

"Why?"

Again that word! To him it was the most tantalizing word in the language. It crucified him.

"Why?" she repeated, her eyes soft and dreamy.

"As I have said, I am not a prince. I am only a consul, not even a diplomat, simply a business arm of my government. My diplomacy never ascends above the quality of hops and wines imported. I am supposed to take in any wandering sailor, feed him, and slip him home. I am also the official guide of all American tourists."

"That is no reason."

"Your father——" He should have said the grand duke.

"Ah, yes; my father, the chancellor, the ambassadors, and their wives and daughters! I begin to believe that you have grown afraid of them."

"I confess that I am. I had an adventure last night. Would you like to hear about it?"

How beautiful she was in that simple gown of white, unadorned by any jewels save the little crown of sparkling white stones in her hair!

"Tell me."

He was a good story-teller. It was a crisp narrative he made.

"A veiled lady," she mused. "What would you say if I told you that your mystery is no mystery at all? I am the veiled lady. And the person I went to see was my old nurse, my foster-mother, with whom I spent the happiest, freest days of my life, in the garret at Dresden. Pouf! All mysteries may be dispelled if we go to the right person. So you are to be recalled?"

"I have asked for my recall, your highness," he corrected.

"And so Dreiberg no longer appeals to you? You once told me that you loved it."

"I am cursed with *wanderlust*, your highness." He regretted that he had not remained in the ballroom. He was in great danger.

"You promised to tell me what she is like."

Suddenly all his fear went away, all his trepidation; the spirit of recklessness which had vised him a little while ago again overpowered him. His face flushed and there were bright points of fire in his eyes. She saw what she had roused, and grew afraid herself. She pretended to become interested in the Watteau cupids on her fan.

"How shall I describe her?" he said. "I have seen only paintings and marbles, and these are inanimate. I have never seen angels, so I cannot draw a comparison there. Have you ever seen ripe wheat in a rain-storm? That is the color of her hair. There is jade and lapis-lazuli in her eyes. And Ole Bull could not imitate the music of her voice." He leaned toward her. "And I love her better than life, better than

hope; and between us there is the distance of a thousand worlds. So I must give up the dream and go away, as an honorable man should."

Neither of them heard the chancellor's approach.

"And because I love her."

The fan in her hand slipped unheeded to the floor.

"Your highness," broke in the cold even tones of Herbeck, "your father is making inquiries about you."

Carmichael rose instantly, white as the frill in his shirt.

Hildegarde, however, was a princess. She gained her feet leisurely, with half a smile on her lips.

"Count, Herr Carmichael tells me that he is soon to leave Dreiberg."

"Ah!" There was satisfaction in Herbeck's ejaculation, satisfaction of a frank order. But there was a glint of admiration in his eyes as he recognized the challenge in Carmichael's. He saw that he must step carefully in regard to this hot-headed young Irishman. "We shall miss Herr Carmichael."

Her highness moved serenely toward the door. Carmichael waited till she was gone from sight, then he stooped and picked up the fan. Herbeck at once held out his hand.

"Give it to me, Herr Captain," he said, with a melancholy gentleness. "I will return it to her highness."

Carmichael deliberately thrust the fan into a pocket and shook his head.

"Your excellency, I do not know how long you stood behind us, but you were there long enough to learn that I have surrendered my dream. Nothing but force will cause me to surrender this fan."

"Keep it, then, my son," replied the chancellor, with good understanding.

CHAPTER XVII.

The ducal vineyards covered some forty acres of rich hillside. All day long the sun beat squarely upon the clustering fruit. A low rambling building of stone covered the presses and bottling departments, and was within comparatively easy distance of the city.

A former steward had full charge of the business, personally hiring and paying the help and supervising the various branches. He was a gruff old fellow, just and honest; and once you entered his employ he was as much a martinet as any captain at sea.

The entrance to the vineyards was made through a small lodge where the ducal vintner lived, and kept his books and moneys till such time as he should be required to place them before the proper official.

Upon this brave morning, the one following the ball at the palace, the vintner was reclining against the outside wall of the gates, smoking his china-pipe and generally at peace with the world. The bloom was early upon the grape, work was begun, and the vintage promised to be exceptionally fine. Through a drifting cloud of smoke he discerned a solitary figure approaching from the direction of Dreiberg, a youthful figure, buoyant of step, and confident. Herr Hoffman was rather interested. Ordinarily the peasant who came to this gate had his hat in his hand and his feet were laggard. Not so this youth. He paused at the gate and inspected the old man carefully.

"Herr Hoffman?"

"Yes."

"I want work."

"So? What can you do?" He was a clean youngster, this, but there was something in his eyes that vaguely disturbed the head vintner. It was like mockery more than anything else.

The youth recounted his abilities, and Hoffman was gracious enough to admit that he seemed to know what he was talking about.

"I have a letter to you, also."

"Ach! We shall be properly introduced now," said Hoffman, growling. "Let me see it."

He saw it, but with starting eyes. There was, then, something new under the sun? A picker of grapes, recommended by a princess! He turned the letter inside out, but found no illumination.

"Du lieber Gott! You are Leopold Dietrich?"

"Yes, herr."

"How did you come by this letter?"

"Her serene highness is patron to Gretchen the goose-girl, at whose request the recommendation was given me."

This altered matters. "Follow me," said Hoffman.

The two entered the office.

"Can you write?"

"A little, herr."

"Then write your name on this piece of paper and that. Each night you will present yours with the number of pounds, which will be credited to you. You must bring it back each morning. If you lose it you will be paid nothing."

Dietrich wrote his name twice. It was rather hard work, for he screwed up his mouth and cramped his fingers. Still, Hoffman was not wholly satisfied with his eyes.

"Gottlieb," he said to one of the men, "take him to terrace ninety-eight. That hasn't been touched yet. We'll see what sort of a workman he is."

Terrace ninety-eight was given over to small grapes; thus, many bunches had to be picked to fill the basket. But Dietrich went to work with a will. His fingers were deft and his knife was sharp; and by midsun he had turned his sixth basket, which was fair work, considering.

As Hoffman did not feed his employees, Dietrich was obliged to beg from his coworkers. Very willingly they shared with him their coarse bread and onions. He ate the bread and stuffed the onions in his pocket. There was no idling. As soon as the frugal meal was over, the peasants trooped away to their respective terraces. Once more the youth was alone. He set down his basket and laughed. Was there ever such a fine world? Had there ever been a more likable adventure? The very danger of it was the spice which gave it flavor. He stretched out his arms as if to embrace this world which appeared so rosy, so joyous to his imagination.

"Thanks, thanks! You have given me youth, and I accept it," he said aloud, perhaps addressing that mutable goddess who presides over all follies. "Regret it in my old age? Not I! I shall have lived for one short month. Youth was given to us to enjoy, and I propose to press the grape to the final drop. And when I grow old this adventure shall be the tonic to wipe out many wrinkles of care. A mad fling, a brimming cup, one short merry month —and then, the reckoning! How I hate the thought!"

He sobered; the laughter went out of his eyes and face. Changeful twenty, where so many paths reach out into the great world, paths straight and narrow, of devious turnings which end at precipices, of blind alleys which lead nowhere and close in behind!

"I love her, I love her!" His face grew bright again, and the wooing blood ran tingling in his veins. "Am I a thief, a scoundrelly thief, because I have that right common to all men, to love one woman? Some day I shall suffer for this; some day my heart shall ache; so be it!"

The sun began the downward circle; the shadows crept eastward and imperceptibly grew longer; a gray tone settled under the stones at his feet. Sometimes he sang, sometimes he stood dreaming. His fingers were growing sore and sticky and there was a twinge in his back as he shouldered his eighth basket and scrambled down to the man who weighed the pick. He was beginning his ninth when he saw Gretchen coming along the purple aisle. She waved a hand in welcome, and he sheathed his knife. No more work this day for him. He waited.

"What a beautiful day!" said Gretchen, with a happy laugh.

"Aye, what a day for love!"

"And work!"

"Kiss me!"

"When you fill that basket."

"Not before?"

"Not even a little one," mischief in her glance.

Out came the knife and the vintner plied himself furiously. Gretchen had a knife of her own, and she joined him. They laughed. Snip, snip; bunch by bunch the contents of the basket grew.

"There!" he said at last. "That's

what I call work; but it is worth it. Now!"

Gretchen saw that it would be futile to hold him off longer; what she would not give he would of a surety take. So she put her hands behind her back, closed her eyes, and raised her chin. He kissed not only the lovely mouth, but the eyes and cheeks and hair.

"Gretchen, you are as good and beautiful as an angel."

"What are angels like?"

"An angel is the most beautiful woman a poet can describe or imagine."

"Then there are no men angels?"

"Only Gabriel; at least I never heard of any other."

"Then I do not want to be an angel. I had rather be what I am. Besides, angels do not have tempers; they do not long for things they should not have; they have no sweethearts." She caught him roughly by the arms. "Ah, if anything should happen to you, I should die! It seems as though I had a hundred hearts and that they had all melted into one for love of you. Do men love as women love? Is it everything and all things, or only an incident? I would give up my soul to you if you asked for it."

"I ask only for your love, Gretchen; only that." And he pressed her hands. "All men are rogues, more or less. There are so many currents and eddies entering into a man's life. It is made up of a thousand variant interests. No, man's love is never like a woman's. But remember this, Gretchen, I loved you the best I knew how, as a man loves but once, honorably as it was possible, purely and dearly."

The shade of trouble crossed her face.

"Why are you always talking like that? Do I not know that you love me? Have I not my dowry, and are we not to be married after the vintage?"

"But your singing?"

"Singing? Why, my voice belongs to you; for your sake I wish to be great, for no other reason."

He ripped a bunch of grapes from the vine, a thing no careful vintner should do, and held it toward her.

"Have you ever heard of the kissing cherries?" he asked.

She shook her head. He explained.

"This bunch will do very well."

He took one grape at the bottom in his teeth. Gingerly Gretchen did the same. Their lips met in a smothered laughter. They tried it again.

And this Watteau picture met the gaze of two persons on the terrace below. The empurpling face of one threatened an explosion, but the smiling face of the other restrained this vocal thunder. The old head vintner kicked a stone savagely, and at this rattling noise Gretchen and her lover turned. They beheld the steward, and peering over his shoulder the amused countenance of the Princess Hildegarde.

"You——" began the steward, no longer able to contain himself.

"Patience, Hoffman!" warned her highness. Then she laughed blithely. It was such a charming picture, and never had she seen a handsomer pair of bucolic lovers. A sudden pang drove the merriment from her face. Ah, but she envied Gretchen! For the peasant there was freedom, for her there was the chosen mate; but for the princess——

"Your hat, scoundrel!" cried Hoffman.

The vintner snatched off his hat apologetically and swung it round on the tips of his fingers.

"Is this the way you work?"

"I have picked nine baskets."

"You should have picked twelve."

It interested her highness to note that this handsome young fellow was not afraid of the head vintner. So this was Gretchen's lover? He was really handsome; there was nothing coarse about his features or figure. And presently she realized that he was returning her scrutiny with interest. He had never seen her highness at close range before, and he now saw that Gretchen was more beautiful only because he saw her through the eyes of a lover.

The pause was broken by Gretchen.

"Pardon, highness!"

"For what, Gretchen?"

"For not having seen your approach."

"That was my fault, not yours. When is the wedding?"

"After the vintage, highness."

Her highness then spoke to the bridegroom-elect. "You will be good to her?"

"Who could help it, your highness?"

The pronoun struck her oddly, for peasants as a usual thing never used it in addressing the nobility.

"Well, on the day of the wedding I will stand sponsor to you both. And good luck go with you. Come, Hoffman; my horse will be restive and my men impatient."

She passed down the aisle, and the head vintner followed, wagging his head. He was not at all satisfied with that tableau. He employed men to work; he wanted no love-affairs inside his vineyards. As for her highness, she had come for the sole purpose of seeing Gretchen's lover; and it occurred to her that the really desirable men were generally unencumbered by titles.

"He will discharge me," said the young vintner gloomily.

"He will not dare," returned Gretchen. "We have done nothing wrong. Her highness will stand by us. It must be five o'clock," looking at the sun.

"In that case, no more work for the day."

He swung the basket to his shoulder, and the sun, flashing upon its contents, turned the bloomy globes into dull rubies. He presented his card at the office and was duly credited with three crowns, which, according to Gretchen, was a fine day's work. Hoffman said nothing about dismissal.

"Work at last," said Dietrich, as he and Gretchen started for the city. "If I can get a position in the brewery for the winter I shall be rich."

"Oh, the beautiful world!"

Arm in arm they went on. Sometimes Gretchen sang; often he put her hand to his lips. By and by they came abreast of an old gipsy. He wore a coat of Joseph's, and his face was as lined as a frost-bitten apple. But his eyes were keen and undimmed, and he walked confidently and erect, like a man who always lived in the open.

"Will you tell me how to find the Adlergasse?" he asked in broken German. His accent was that of a Magyar. He had a smattering of a dozen tongues at his command, for in his time he had crossed and recrossed the Danube, the Rhine, and the Rhone.

They carelessly gave him specific directions and passed on. He followed grimly, like Fate, whose agent he was, though long delayed. When he reached the Adlergasse he looked for a sign. He came to a stop in front of the dingy shop of the clock-mender. He went inside, and the ancient clock-mender looked up from his work, for he was always working.

He rose wearily and asked what he could do for his customer. His eyes were bothering him, so the fact that the man was a gipsy did not at first impress him.

The gipsy smiled mysteriously and laid a hand on his heart.

"Who are you?" sharply demanded the clock-mender.

"Who I am does not matter. I am he whom you seek."

"God in heaven!" The bony hands of the clock-mender shot out and clutched the other's coat in a grip which shook, so intense was it.

The gipsy released himself slowly. "But first show me your pretty crowns and the paper which will give me immunity from the police. I know something about you. You never break your word. That is why I came. Your crowns, as you offered, and immunity; then I speak."

"Man, I can give you the crowns, but God knows I have no longer the power to give you immunity."

"So?"

The gipsy shouldered his bundle.

"For God's sake, wait!" begged the clock-mender.

But the gipsy walked out, unheeding.

TO BE CONCLUDED.



IT was exactly twenty-five minutes past midnight—the morning of Ash Wednesday. I noted the fact as I went up the staircase leading to the foyer of the French Opera House. It was toward the close of the Comus Ball. The tableaux were over, the maskers' dances finished, the black coats in possession of the stage, and people were scurrying in every direction, gathering their wraps and friends preparatory to departing. The reason I remember the hour so particularly was that as my eyes wandered from the large clock at the head of the staircase she was standing just beneath it. Twenty-five minutes after midnight was evidently my psychological moment. I knew that just as soon as I had seen her, and without the least hesitation I moved from the right side of the staircase to the left, so that when I should reach the top I would be directly beside her.

With each step my view of her became less impressionistic. At first it had been the scintillating effect that had caught my attention, not so much the brilliancy of her costume, though that was glittering enough by reason of a gorgeously embroidered mantle draped around her, but about her face and head there was something indescribably dazzling. Reddish-golden hair in which was twisted a wreath of diamond leaves; perfectly white skin, transparent and velvety; eyes a little close together, accentuated by heavily marked eyebrows, which gave them intensity and an elusive expression; a nose which no word save adventurous describes; all these and a thousand other things went to make up an ensemble which made me realize that the first moment I saw her was an eventful one.

What I was going to do when I finally reached her side never entered my head. All that I thought of was to get to her—afterward carrying her madly off, or any of the various things that princes in fairy books do would not have been too extravagant.

My expression must have shown plainly my state of mind, for when I felt some one grab my arm from behind and turned quickly, I found Jack Winston there laughing at me.

"Hello!" I cried. "What's up?"

"That is what we want to know," Mrs. Winston laughed, searching my face in a disconcerting way. "Have you forgotten you are going to Mrs. Vincenne's for supper?"

"No, I'm on my way there now. You told me to meet you there—in box eighteen, was it not?"

"Yes, but we couldn't wait for you. Mrs. Vincenne said she would know you from my description, and that no introduction was necessary."

I hesitated a moment, a little undecided.

"But I hate to break in on a complete stranger like that. You know I have never even seen her."

"Oh, that's all right," Jack said reassuringly. "Vincenne is my best friend and he asked me a week ago to save you for his party. Surely we've told you enough about Mrs. Vincenne!"

I hastily recalled some gossip Jack had told me about his best friend marrying a woman entirely out of his class who was continually embarrassing her

husband, herself, and her friends. Something perfectly dreadful and equally amusing invariably happened at their entertainments. For this reason the Winstons did not want me to leave town without an experience in their home and a view of Mrs. Vincenne's celebrated pearl necklace.

"Well, I'm game," I replied resolutely. "You think she will know me?"

"I'm sure of it—and besides, I saw Carrie Horner to-night and she told me her guest had arrived this afternoon and would be at the supper," Mrs. Winston explained enthusiastically. "A Miss Follansbee, from Louisville. They say she is beautiful."

The crowd had pushed us quite against the wall until turning suddenly I found myself directly beside the beauty who had drawn me up the staircase. I started when I met her eyes looking frankly at me and saw a slight smile quivering on her lips; nor did she look away when I returned her glance.

"Well—good night and good luck!" called Mrs. Winston as she started down the steps.

"You have the key," Jack said, with an added whisper: "Don't be surprised at anything that occurs. I've told you all about her."

Involuntarily I turned as soon as they had gone and hastily looked for the beauty beneath the clock. She was still there beside me and still looking at me. It was almost disconcerting, this perfect frankness, and when I saw that her lips were parted and that she was going to speak—well, to be perfectly honest, I believe my surprise was evident.

"I overheard your conversation."

She said this in the most casual way, for all the world as if we had been interrupted and were resuming our talk.

I stammered a moment and then pulled myself together. Because she was dazzling and talking to me was no reason for me to lose my head completely.

"It was perfectly proper—you're bound to admit," I replied at last.

I think she smiled—a veiled, unconfessed smile.

"Yes, and to the point."

Her voice was clear and fresh and very soft; beyond that, it had a caressing gentleness that was adorable. But what did she mean by "to the point"?

"To the point?" I repeated, "I don't follow you."

"No, that is for me to do; that is, if you will let me." Here the dark brows drew together in a slightly troubled way. If I had only looked at her lips I should have known she was laughing at me.

I found no answer to this last remark.

"You spoke of Mrs. Horner and Mrs. Vincenne. I am Mrs. Horner's guest.

"Miss Follansbee?" I bowed.

"Yes, from Louisville; and I have been lost from Mrs. Horner ever since the last maskers' dance."

"And you've been looking for her all this time?" I exclaimed. It had been at least half an hour since the maskers retired, after having showered crowns, sceptres, and jeweled mantles upon their favorites.

She smiled and lifted her head a little. It was then that the adventurous nose showed so strikingly.

"Yes, trailing around in this outrageous mantle"—with one hand she drew the jeweled folds about her—"with diamond wreaths in my hair. Fortunately they are not vine leaves. All of which some maskers insisted on decorating me with; altogether having a beautiful time, looking on and wandering about and not having to talk when I wanted to look and listen."

I was drinking in her beauty all the while, neither of us yet making any motion to move.

"But now all that is over." She sighed a little. "I've found some one who is going to take me back to all the conventions again." She gathered the folds of her gown about her and looked up at me. "Will you be good enough to take me to Mrs. Horner?"

Somehow, try as hard as I might, I could not help staring into her face. There was so much there that was more than beautiful; and her eyes puzzled me

beyond measure. Already I had counted four colors, yellow, gray, brown, and violet, and now they seemed exactly the color of her hair—an indescribable amber. So deep was I in the study that I failed to respond to her last question, and it was only her expression that finally brought me back to the matter in hand; an expression much like that of one who is humoring a child, careless, insouciant, smiling.

"Well," she said finally, "you do not care to do it?"

"Oh—I—you mean take you to Mrs. Horner?" I stammered again. You would have done the same if you had seen her. "Of course I'm going to take you to her, although——"

"Yes?"

Her hand was resting on my arm as we went down the staircase. The thrill her touch brought to me made me suddenly bold.

"Although I should much rather not take you back to all the conventions you hate so. You ought to be carried off to some fairy castle—you belong there—in a place of dreams."

She did not answer at once. For several minutes we threaded the corridor about the parquet in silence. Perhaps I had gone too far, I thought; then her voice came low and near to my ear.

"Have you a castle of dreams, too?"

"I never knew it till to-night."

Suddenly I stopped. The corridor was almost empty.

"Where are we going?" I exclaimed.

She looked up not the least disconcerted at what must have seemed to her my remarkable manner.

"You are taking me to Mrs. Horner."

"But you did not tell me where you had left her."

She drew her brows together.

"It was at least two hours ago. We were sitting very near the stage and when the usher came for me for the first maskers' dance I left her just in there."

We stopped at one of the parquet aisles.

"And you haven't seen her since?"

"No, the dances continued and I was on the stage all the time. When I came down finally she was not there."

Then I began to plan a little, remembering that Mrs. Winston had said that Miss Follansbee would be at Mrs. Vincenne's supper. This information simplified the entire situation.

"I have it," I exclaimed with this thought. "You are expected at Mrs. Vincenne's to-night, so, of course, we shall find the Horners in her box."

She shook her head slowly.

"No, I hardly think so. The Horners are not going to the Vincennes' supper—they have another engagement. You see, they did not expect me till to-morrow and it was only by chance Mrs. Vincenne heard I had come this afternoon and asked me to be her guest to-night. It seems she is a very good friend of my hostess."

"Then you know her. That is fortunate, for I do not."

At this she laughed outright.

"No, I have never seen her or heard of her till to-night. Mrs. Horner has told me a great deal, however, principally about her pearl necklace."

The situation was growing complicated. I took off both gloves to think the better.

"Do you think, Miss Follansbee," I began doubtfully, "that it is possible for us to beard Mrs. Vincenne in her box?"

"What else can we do?"

"It is an abominable situation for you," I grumbled.

"It's adorable," she said. "It's an adventure, and I am in a sympathetic mood for one to-night." She raised her head once more with that gesture that brought to me an impression of an untamed, wild spirit—some characteristic that made its way through her air of richness and softness and convention. "It's carnival night and it's the time of all for extravaganza. We might as well be in Paris or Vienna—at least, as far as I am known."

We were on our way now to the floor above with the first tier of boxes. Her hand was again on my arm, and

there was no lessening of that first thrill. If the spirit of adventure had been felt by her I was doubly in its grip. We stopped before box eighteen. The corridor was dimly lighted. As my hand grasped the knob of the door I felt her touch tremble on my arm. Her eyes were glowing and very close to mine. Her breath came with a slight effort.

"It's almost daring, isn't it?" she whispered, giving me a swift, searching glance. "It may be an adventure, after all."

I caught her hands in mine and held them there.

"It's already an adventure for me—a very serious one. I am head over heels in love with you. I have been ever since the moment I saw you, when you were standing under the clock at twenty-five minutes past twelve."

She looked at me seriously; then her eyes narrowed bewitchingly and her laughter came low and sweet and full of camaraderie.

"You are splendid," she said, her hands still in mine. "If all men would only realize that only two attitudes are possible when they meet a woman for the first time!" She sighed as though the weight of the world were on her shoulders. "Ah, it would make everything so much more endurable."

"Two attitudes?" I demanded. "What are they?"

"Absolute indifference or mad love."

Her hands dropped from mine slowly.

"Then you know mine. I am glad of it."

"Do I know?" She moved away a step. "I am not certain. There must be a test."

"Then make it," I said firmly.

She looked at me thoughtfully, and in the next moment I saw that slight lifting of the head. Into her eyes shot that spirit of untamed things.

"If I dared," she said slowly, "I could do it."

"Then do it."

She turned toward the door. I again grasped the knob.

"Will you introduce me to Mrs. Vincenne?" She was smiling again.

"Yes. Will you introduce me?" I answered her smile.

"Of course, one good turn——"

"But you don't know my name."

She looked down the corridor away from me. I could see only the gold masses of her hair and the diamond wreath glowing in the subdued light.

"Mr. Frederick Thornton, of New York, I believe."

I was astonished. The Winstons had not called my name. How in the world had she found it out?

"I know we have never met before," I asserted.

"No, not in this world."

"But I don't understand——"

The door was open now, and her face, as the light from within shone on it, was strikingly serious.

"Promise me now, before we go further," she said in a low, I thought slightly nervous voice, "promise me you will not be surprised at anything I know or do."

I raised her hand to my lips.

"I would promise you anything you asked."

Then I stepped back to let her pass in first. For a moment she did not move forward, her face still deadly serious.

"Above all, remember that you are madly in love," she said over her shoulder. "That may help you."

Then, with a slightly perceptible effort she seemed to gather her forces, lifted her head just the least bit, and entered the box brilliant and smiling.

II.

The introductions were accomplished more successfully than I had hoped. Mrs. Vincenne, a blonde, overdressed, and excitable little woman accepted the situation as a great joke, although she berated both my friends and Miss Follansbee's for neglecting us in such a fashion.

After we had been introduced indiscriminately—a wholesale calling of names and shaking of hands without knowing which applied to which—I glanced around the group to see if there

were any one whom I had met during my sojourn of a few days in New Orleans. They were all strangers. The thought never struck me that this might prove embarrassing.

"I've been waiting for you both one solid hour," Mrs. Vincenne said to me as I walked with her ahead of the others toward the entrance. Her voice was particularly high-pitched and strident; but then I had been listening to a voice of music for the last few minutes. "What do you think Carrie Horner meant by leaving her guest that way? I told her to bring Miss Follansbee to my box promptly at twelve o'clock, and here it is quite one—and I ordered *canard au tour d'argent* tonight! Fancy what it will taste like when we get home."

"I don't believe either Mrs. Horner or my friends were to be blamed," I answered, for the first time noticing the pearl necklace clasped about her throat. Evidently she was careful not to pull her wrap high enough to hide it. "The Winstons and I had been separated, and so had Miss Follansbee been lost from her hosts. Our meeting was purely an accident." And I told her of the incident on the staircase.

When I had finished Mrs. Vincenne stopped abruptly and looked at me.

"Then you mean to tell me, Mr. Thornton, that you do not know whether she is Miss Follansbee or not?"

I frowned at her doubt. We were standing directly beneath a high electric light, and as I looked down at my companion I could see too plainly the signs of make-up. This, with her dress and manner, gave me a sudden, violent dislike for her.

"I am perfectly sure she is Miss Follansbee." It was a great effort to keep my voice polite. "Why should I doubt it—or you?"

Mrs. Vincenne raised her shoulders perceptibly and glanced over them toward Miss Follansbee. When her eyes met mine again they were far from reassuring. In them was an expression of wonderment at my simplicity.

"Simply because she told you that was her name you believed her."

"I did—I do believe her." I flushed. "Don't you think one can tell when a woman is a lady? Could any one doubt when——"

"Oh! Tut! Tut! Boy! You can't tell anything about anybody these days. It's all a matter of hairdresser, manicurist, and dressmaker."

I bit my lips in silence and wondered why the Jack Winstons had sent me to this woman's party. Evidently it was some sort of a practical joke. But I had to reply to the last remark.

"Pardon me, Mrs. Vincenne, but I do not agree with you at all."

She glanced at me indifferently, then laughed in what I supposed she thought was a fetching manner.

"Oh, very well, get furious if you please. Anyhow, I think your new friend looks like an adventuress." Then she added with a conciliatory laugh: "Let me give you a perfectly good piece of advice. Don't make a habit of meeting strange women on staircases at carnival balls and taking them to supper at your friends' houses."

By this time I was furious. It was no longer a joke with me. "Mrs. Vincenne, I see I have made a mistake. If you will allow me I shall not come to your supper—furthermore, I shall ask Miss Follansbee to permit me to take her home."

At this she broke into very loud laughter.

"Of course, you don't understand me. Nobody ever does. I am just having a little fun at your expense. I don't mind her coming in the least. If she turns out to be an adventuress it will be all the more exciting. And as for you, I shouldn't think of letting you off from my party."

Two large limousines had drawn up before the door where we were standing and Mrs. Vincenne immediately called to the crowd to get in.

I had had but little chance even to glance at Miss Follansbee for the last few minutes, but each time I had seen her she was surrounded by four men of our party. Evidently she had forgotten me entirely in her absorbing entertainment of the four men. When I

saw her disappear in the first limousine, followed by the same men, and realized that I was to follow in the car with Mrs. Vincenne and a Mrs. Wheeler, I felt again that I had made a mistake in coming to this party at all. Then I thought of her and of seeing her again, and I actually believe the prospect made me fairly entertaining on the long drive.

In the smoking room while we were removing our coats I had the exquisite pleasure of listening to the men who had ridden there with her discuss Miss Follansbee. How suddenly this wholesale discussion of a girl's assets becomes distasteful to a man who is interested in her!

Vincenne seemed enthusiastic. "The most beautiful woman I ever saw!"

"She's a winner," drawled a young chap named Wentworth, a veritable cad.

"From Kentucky—what else could you expect? It's the place for good whisky, fine horses, and beautiful women," commented another fellow between puffs at a cigarette.

Each of these had passed at least thirty minutes with her on the drive from the ball to the house. I started when I realized that I had spent no longer time with her myself. The only comfort was that I had been alone with her; with those men there had been four to share the conversation. Surely I had the prior claim. I decided to listen to them calmly, if not good-humoredly.

"And her eyes," raved a fellow from the depths of a leather chair. "I can't make out what color they are at all, can you, Mr. Thornton?"

"What does it matter what color they are?" Mrs. Wheeler's husband answered for me. "It's enough that they are bewildering. It's her voice that fascinates me. It makes you feel that she means everything she says for you alone, no matter if there are three other men present."

Vincenne rose and threw away his cigarette.

"Come on, boys," he said. "Why should we sit here and talk about her when we can look at her and listen to her right in the next room? We are wasting time, aren't we, Mr. Thornton?"

So we all filed into the drawing-room.

She was sitting between Mrs. Wheeler and Mrs. Vincenne on a deep divan. She had left off the scintillating mantle, and for the first time I saw she was dressed entirely in black—soft, clinging folds that left her bare arms and neck even more milky white than before. She seemed to look older than when I had talked to her at the ball; there was a more languid look in her eyes and she appeared even paler, if such a thing were possible, all of which was probably due to the unrelieved black gown.

In her hands was the pearl necklace Mrs. Vincenne had evidently taken off to show her. She was looking at it intently as we entered the room, and as she looked up I caught her eye for just a moment. It was a startling rapid glance she gave me, and one full of a meaning that I did not comprehend. The intensity of this look ended with a smile that brought me over to the divan before her.

"The large one I bought in Vienna," Mrs. Vincenne continued explaining to her, taking no notice of our entrance. "You can see how it forms the keystone of the necklace. And these two on each side are perfectly matched. Just fancy, one came from Persia and the other I just chanced upon here in New Orleans! Isn't that remarkable?"

The story of the necklace was continued, telling how each separate pearl had been scented, run down, and captured; and all the while the butler and the guests waited for the signal to move into the dining room. To Miss Follansbee, however, the story seemed absorbing. All the while she listened intently she was letting the pearls run through her fingers, touching them now and again caressingly. It was evident she appreciated their value. When she handed them back to Mrs. Vincenne her eyes followed them intently till they were clasped about Mrs. Vincenne's throat.

It was then that she looked at me

again, half smiling, half serious, with a meaning I could not read.

On the way into the dining room I was beside her a minute.

"You forsook me at the first chance," I said reproachfully.

She lifted her eyebrows, purposely surprised.

"For four other men," I grumbled.

"At least there was safety."

"All of whom disagree with you."

Again she played surprised.

"In regard to their being two attitudes. With them there is only one."

"Jealous, jealous, jealous!" she repeated in a low voice. Then still lower: "But I'm glad."

"I'm serious—please don't jest. I've meant everything I've said."

Her eyes clouded for a second and her lips contracted.

"How long will you think that, I wonder."

Then Mr. Vincenne called her to a seat at the table on his right.

III.

The supper went splendidly. I lost all sense of responsibility so far as my part of the conversation went in a complete abandon of watching Miss Follansbee. She was the life of the party, the centre toward which every remark was directed. Her quick replies, her sympathetic listening, and one or two excellent stories—stories the point of which was deftly wrapped in inference—made her charm unquestionable. And the most enjoyable part of the whole experience to me was watching the effect on Mrs. Vincenne. Evidently she was a woman who was accustomed to reigning supreme at her own entertainments. You know the kind I mean; one who demands of her guests complete subservience to her conversation and choice of subjects. In this case, however, she was so far outranked that her obvious efforts were all failures. Even Vincenne himself had given Miss Follansbee his entire attention.

Toward the end of the supper I became alarmed. Any one could see that Mrs. Vincenne would not stand for Miss Follansbee's success much longer.

During the first pause in the conversation Mrs. Vincenne leaned forward and addressed her husband at the far end of the table.

"Did Mr. Thornton tell you how he met Miss Follansbee?" she asked, her high-pitched voice full of innuendo.

Of course, every one looked at Miss Follansbee. She glanced up quickly, almost startled it seemed.

"Did he tell?" she exclaimed. "Faithless! Faithless!" She looked at me reproachfully, then smiled at the others.

"I only explained how we were both in the same predicament." I colored, I'm sure.

"You do not object, Miss Follansbee?" Mrs. Vincenne put in sharply.

Miss Follansbee met her hostess' insinuating look calmly.

"I? No. Why should I?"

Then the crisis came. While Mrs. Vincenne was giving a highly colored account of what I had told her the *pêche flambée* was being served; and as she was helping herself a burning peach slipped from the platter on to the table before her. As she pushed back her chair the pearl necklace about her neck broke and the pearls fell pell-mell about her, on the table, under it, and seemingly everywhere.

Exclamations and laughter followed till we saw that tears of rage and vexation were streaming down Mrs. Vincenne's face.

"Oh, my pearls! My pearls!" she screamed hysterically. "Save them! Don't let any of them get away! John," to her husband, "order the servants out of the room. We must collect them ourselves. I would not lose one of them for anything in the world. Please look for them—all of you!"

The servants retired respectfully and all of us went diligently to work to collect the pearls. Miss Follansbee handed three which had rolled directly toward her plate to Mrs. Vincenne; I found one in front of me; and each of the guests had collected some. After clearing the table we pushed back the

chairs and looked on the floor. All this time Mrs. Vincenne sat in her chair counting the pearls as they were turned over to her, weeping and talking incessantly.

"Eighteen, nineteen, twenty, twenty-one!" Suddenly she looked up absolutely silent.

"Well, dear, what is it? Aren't they all there?" asked her husband.

Mrs. Vincenne's calmness was even more hysterical than her volubility. It looked now as if she were going to faint.

"Every one is here," she said, "except the central one—the large one."

She looked from one to the other of us reproachfully and then burst into a fresh torrent of tears.

Vincenne went to her chair, vainly attempting to calm her; Mrs. Wheeler tried to find reassuring words; while the rest of us shook rugs and window curtains, moved heavy furniture and made an absolutely thorough search. The pearl could not be found.

Miss Follansbee sat quietly in her chair, her expression a compromise between sympathetic concern and restrained mirth. Once, when I looked at her, she could keep back her amusement no longer, and with her face averted and a handkerchief to her mouth, she choked back her laughter.

But not before Mrs. Vincenne had seen her. It was like a red rag to a bull. The storm burst in all its fury. "It is all your fault, Mr. Thornton," Mrs. Vincenne screamed. "I told you you did not know who she was. I knew she was an adventuress the moment I saw her—and now she has my pearl—I know it—my ten thousand dollar pearl—and I hold you responsible for it, Mr. Thornton—you've got to make her give it up!"

Vincenne strove heroically to stop the flow of words. Every one's expression was ghastly. A dead silence made the words all the more vibrant.

Miss Follansbee had risen at the first insinuation and stood facing Mrs. Vincenne, her face flushed, her eyes blazing. She listened, as the rest of us, in dead silence.

Vincenne held out his hand toward her pleadingly. "Please forgive her, Miss Follansbee. It's hysteria. She has had it often before. She has no idea what she is saying."

"But I do—I do know what I'm saying. Ask Mr. Thornton if he did not meet her on the staircase at the ball. He doesn't know her any more than I do, or any of you. It's all a trap she has led us into. She can't deny it—and she has my pearl! Ask her to deny it! She can't!"

Miss Follansbee looked at Mrs. Vincenne steadily during this outburst. The color that came at first had drained out of her face and left it even paler than before. In the moment of silence that followed she looked at each one of us searchingly; then her voice came very low.

"What she has said is so. Mr. Thornton did meet me on the staircase and I spoke to him first. He has no certainty that I have given him my correct name."

"I do know," I broke in quickly. "I have your word—I have more than that. I have——" I hesitated hopelessly.

"What?" she asked swiftly.

"My belief in you."

"And I!" cried Wheeler.

"And I!" cried the rest of the men.

"Gentlemen, we all believe in Miss Follansbee—of course we do," Vincenne said finally. "If I can only get my wife to her room I can apologize humbly for the unintentional insult. Mrs. Vincenne is evidently quite delirious."

He slipped his arm around his wife's waist and attempted to lift her, but vainly. She was immovable.

"I shall not leave this room till that woman hands me my pearl."

Suddenly Miss Follansbee turned to me.

"Please telephone Mrs. Horner to come for me at once. Possibly that will relieve the doubt about my identity."

I welcomed the idea and rushed to the telephone. After a struggle with the central office I got a connection

with the Horners' home. The butler answered. The Horners had not returned and they had left word that they were going to supper from the ball and would not return till late—the butler did not know where they had gone, had not the slightest idea where they could be found.

I went back to the dining room cursing the fates that gave men wives like Vincenne's.

Every one seemed to be in exactly the same position in which I had left them, except Miss Follansbee. She had sunk into a large chair away from the glow of the table light, apparently deep in thought and oblivious of every one in the room.

Upon my entrance I caught a faint look of relief flash across her face.

I told the result of my telephoning and stared at Vincenne for some result. A moment later I drew a breath of relief when I saw Mrs. Vincenne rise and go swiftly out of the door through which I had come.

Immediately Vincenne crossed the room to Miss Follansbee and extended both hands.

"Is there anything I can say or do? You must know how I feel. Of course my wife realizes now she has made an awful mistake," he added, his voice showing plainly his chagrin. "To-morrow she will be in despair at what has occurred." He turned toward the others. "Can't we all keep this between ourselves? If you are my friends—and all of you are—I may count on your silence surely."

We gathered about him and Miss Follansbee, each one having something more inappropriate than the other to say, and all of us a little puzzled by Miss Follansbee's attitude. All the time Vincenne had been speaking to her she had stared straight before her taking no notice of his words. Afterward, I remember thinking she seemed to be in deep thought.

Mrs. Vincenne returned to the room as swiftly as she had left it. Taking us all in with a glance, she went back to her chair at the table and sat down with decision.

"Have you persuaded her?" she asked sharply.

Vincenne looked at her coldly.

"I do not understand."

"I mean—will she give up the pearl?"

Vincenne's expression was one of despair.

"Because if she will not I have arranged a way that will make her do it."

It was then that I noticed a great change take place in Miss Follansbee. Her head tilted up with that untamed movement, her lips curved slightly, and her eyes deepened into glowing black.

"I have sent for the officers of the law," Mrs. Vincenne concluded.

Miss Follansbee grew more beautiful each moment at this last outburst; her smile was dazzling.

The thought that it might be her courage at its utmost carried me to her side.

"Don't be afraid—don't mind her," I whispered. "They can't do anything."

I felt her hand grip mine, and then with a quick movement she was beside Mr. Vincenne. Her every motion now brought to me a deepening impression of a daring nature unchained.

"Your wife is quite right in one thing, Mr. Vincenne," she said hurriedly. "I am not Miss Follansbee. I overheard Mr. Thornton's conversation with his friends at the ball, and it occurred to me I might have a great deal of fun out of such an adventure. I see it has gone too far. I apologize."

Deadly silence; a sepulchre would have been noisy by comparison with that room. I was sure an earthquake had taken place; and what brought me to my senses quicker than anything else was the noticeable and immediate change in the guests. There was a perceptible falling away from Miss Follansbee as if some danger lurked in her vicinity.

Vincenne was the first to break the silence.

"Then who are you, please?" he asked, with dignity.

Her eyes fell before his direct manner. Indeed, her whole bearing had changed since her declaration. She

was no longer brilliant and dazzling; she looked more delicate and flower-like, and beautifully pitiful. In my upheaval of feelings I believe I loved her more this way than before.

"I cannot tell you," she replied in a very low voice.

"Do you realize that this suspicion is bound to rest on you if you do not clear yourself by telling us who you are?" Vincenne's voice was firm and cold.

"I cannot tell you," she repeated. "I cannot."

A knock sounded on the door and three men, in uniform, entered. Vincenne went to them, followed by his wife. Some whispered words passed between them, then Vincenne came back to Miss Follansbee.

"If you cannot clear yourself I refuse to protect you any longer."

I hastily stepped between them.

"Vincenne, you don't know what you are saying!" I cried. "You know this is all some foolish mistake."

He met my look frigidly.

"I am not aware of that at all. This young woman refuses to declare her identity. Furthermore, I have only your word for your own. Both of you came to us entire strangers. None of us saw either of you before to-night. This, with the fact that my wife's pearl has mysteriously disappeared, I must admit is rather suspicious."

I turned about bewildered and looked at Miss Follansbee. She had sunk into a chair and had covered her face with both her hands. The situation was rapidly becoming unbearable. I turned back to Vincenne furious.

"What do you intend to do?" I demanded.

"I am going to let these men take the matter in charge," with a nod toward the officers.

"You mean arrest her?"

"And you."

I stepped quickly to Miss Follansbee's side and leaned down near to her.

"Give them your name," I said finally. "Tell them the truth. For God's sake let us get this settled before it goes too far."

I waited at least a whole minute for her answer. At last it came.

"I cannot tell them—I cannot."

I looked toward Vincenne.

"She refuses to tell."

"Very well then," he replied stiffly. "You will oblige me by leaving at once with these gentlemen."

I do not think I ever hated a man so much as I did Vincenne at that moment. My fists clenched so suddenly that I could hardly keep back a blow. When I was under control I went to Miss Follansbee, took her hand in mine and drew it through my arm.

At first she did not rise; then, with a quick movement, as if driving herself to it, she stood up beside me. Not looking toward any one, she walked to the door, which an officer held open for us, and we passed out, followed by the three uniformed men.

Vincenne's limousine and a closed cab were waiting at the curb. I walked directly to the car, opened the door, and assisted Miss Follansbee in.

One of the officers stated we must go in the closed cab. I gave him my pocketbook and told him to sit in front, that I would explain when we reached the station. He was more accommodating than I had expected, and the next moment I heard him giving directions to the chauffeur and the car moved off.

In the darkness of the car I could see her eyes glowing.

"Why did you not clear yourself? You could have done it so easily," she said as I sank back on the seat beside her.

"Because I trust you—because I love you—because I believe in you."

For a little while she was silent; then I heard her laugh softly.

"You really still trust me? I can't believe it. I thought you knew all the time that I had the pearl!"

IV.

During the next twenty minutes I probably did the hardest thinking I shall ever be called upon to do; at any

rate, I hope so. There I was sitting beside the woman I had loved from the first moment I had seen her. Subsequent incidents had interrupted this feeling until now, in the full shock of a confession from her lips, I was brought face to face with the fact that she was a thief. Bewildered as it had left me, I was dimly conscious that even that made no difference to me. Indeed, it but deepened my love.

Suddenly I sat up with a start.

"What are you going to do?" I demanded.

"What are *you* going to do?" came her quick response.

"I? What can I do?"

"Surely you can protect me."

"How can I? You say you have the pearl. What do you expect me to do?"

She was silent a long time. Once she moved restlessly, and, I thought, sighed.

"Give me the pearl," I said at last.

"Never!" she replied.

Another silence. Suddenly her hand was on mine.

"You said you loved me," she breathed close to my ear.

I dropped my head in my hands, for the first time utterly miserable.

"I do—I do!"

"Then this makes no difference?"

"That is the worst part of it."

She laughed easily and withdrew to her side of the car.

Her laughter drove me mad. I reached for her hand and gripped it hard.

"Give me the pearl. I can hush this thing up if we get it settled to-night. Take my word for it. Then, afterward——"

"What?"

"We can get away from here—far off somewhere."

Again she laughed. It almost made me hate her.

"To Australia. I suppose? No, thank you, I have no intention of ruining your prospects. You must leave me and go back to your supper party—to your companions—to Mrs. Vincenne."

In the silence that followed I saw a motor rush past us.

"You will not give me the pearl?" I asked once more.

"No."

"Then I shall stand by you to the end."

With a quick movement she was close to my side, leaning against me, her face only a few inches away.

"Stop before it is too late," she said hurriedly. "Go back to your friends and your life. You have done all you could for me. Our lives can never run along together. There is a whole world of conventions and heredity between us. You have done a great deal for me. You helped me to get the pearl. It had all been planned for days. There—I have told you all. Forgive me and forget me. I must go back to the gypsy trail again. There is nothing else left for me. No——"

I had my arms about her now and had stopped her words with my mad kisses.

The car came to a full stop. The door was opened unceremoniously. An electric sign burned before a door, and on it I read: "Chief of Police."

I stepped out, noticing that a large car was already at the curb in front of us. Beside it on the pavement stood a man and a woman in evening clothes.

Holding out my hand I assisted my companion to the pavement. Her appearance was the signal for a scream from the woman in front of us, who rushed forward and threw both arms about her. It was Mrs. Horner.

"Georgette! What in the world does it all mean? I never heard of anything so dreadful in my whole life! Callie Vincenne must have lost all the little sense she ever had. She's mad—quite mad. My poor dear, how have you stood it? We telephoned as soon as we got home to know how you were getting along. We heard at the ball that you had found the Vincennes and gone with them. I wish you had never heard of them."

I fell back several steps and grasped Horner's arm.

"For God's sake, man, tell me—is that Miss Follansbee?"

He looked at me as if he thought I were mad, too.

"Of course. Who'd you think it was?"

I broke away from him and turned back to her. The officer was bowing before the two women.

"I shall be obliged to ask you to step inside," he said to Miss Follansbee and to me.

"Oh, Charles, do tell the man who we are," Mrs. Horner cried to her husband. "He evidently doesn't know it is all a mistake."

Just then a man came out of the door of the office and walked up to us.

"Is one of you Mr. Thornton?" he asked.

"Yes. What is it?"

"Mrs. Vincenne has just telephoned to release you both. She found the pearl while undressing."

I looked at Miss Follansbee. Her head was thrown back, her eyes were brilliant and flashing into mine. There was no word spoken—there was none necessary.

We appropriated the Vincennes' car to take us to the Horners. They had gone ahead in their own after a great deal of insistence on my part.

When we drew up before their door a great many plans had been made—a thousand or more.

"Why did you do it?" I asked, just to hear her say it again.

"To test you," came her answer.

"Then you wanted to test me?" I asked, another repetition.

"Ye-es," she said, in such a way that I read therein a confession.

RONDEL

WITHIN your eyes I look, and looking see
Only myself. Would it were otherwise—
So much there is with greater right to be
Within your eyes.
They should but mirror back the morning skies,
The rose you bend above, your young heart's glee.
Within your eyes I look, and looking see
Only myself. Would it were otherwise!

Oh, child, you shame me with such imagery,
I, who am one with all that youth decries;
You shall not fail your dream in holding me,
Look out, dear heart, where all your kingdom lies.
Within your eyes I look, and looking see
Only myself. Would it were otherwise!

THEODOSIA GARRISON.



A Bad Lands Doctress

By Steel Williams

NEWSPAPER boom, which passes current for Dakoty enterprise, may be all right for the marts of trade east of the Big Muddy, Red, but when it comes to workin' sech a con game on a wilderness cattle camp I has mighty serious doubts as to its bein' of any actooal benefit to the old-timer."

It's towhead Doc White, who makes this some rueful comment as he stands 'fore my imitation walnut, sort of nervous stirrin' the sweetin' which he habitual uses in his liquor.

"Seein' you're a benedict, doc, my expandin' freckles ain't onduly loaded with sympathy. I personal feels powerful sorry for you, though I certain believes that every onattached gent on the Range ain't got nothin' but praise for the *Civilizer's* success in drawin' this eligible to Hell's Kitchen even if, to your ondooin', she has hung out her shingle as a graderate doctress."

"Which I 'low your diagnosis of the feelin's of this bunch of woman chasers, which I has heretofore had for patients, is complete accoorate"—his falsetter is mournin' facetious—"but when I tells you that since she sticks up her sign a month back, I ain't had a call, but has had to set in my drug shop helpless watchin' a good half of the Range ride up to her drygoods box office a pretendin' they needs advice and prescriptions, you sees clear I ain't got no special reason to feel hilarious thankful to Larry for writin' the glowin' article that seduces her into believin' that this desert is not only the original Garden of Eden, but a Eldorado to boot."

And havin' angled his elbow, he broodin' wipes his silk-straw lip with a blue-spot handker as though he's a good deal worried, for he's none too well fixed, and has only been breakin' 'bout even prior to this female's cuttin' in on his solitaire game. But present his brown eyes light up playful as he smiles whimsical:

"Fay tells me"—she's his runnin' mate, who we former calls the "Rattlesnake Girl"—"not to fret, as it's her idee that some gent'll soon lasso my onnat'ral competitor, which diverts her 'tention to fryin' bacon and washin' dishes 'stead of writin' prescriptions at three per. But"—his face cloudin' as he doubtful shakes his flax—"I'm personal 'fraid that bein' able to make her own livin' she'll be mighty slow in exchangin' her job for one which means a heap more work with lots less pay."

"She sure ain't jumpin' eager to get busy with a broom"—my josh is Jobcomfortin'—"for I knows a dozen gents whose invite for her to take charge of their housekeepin' has been declined with thanks."

"And I'm a bettin' the small bank roll I carries"—his browns dances laughin' at my chinys—"that you was the first one she mittens. Does you want to cover it?" He grins, tossin' his few hundred onto the bar.

"No true sport ever gambles on a sure thing"—my come-back's some lame, but it's the best I thinks of—"so you better gather up your change, as 'twouldn't be decent for me to take the bread from the onfort'nate female's mouth who is dependin' on you for her precarious livin'."

Course I endeavors to maintain my usual *sang-frog* under doc's borin'

gaze, but the bluff's a total failure, as the blood is showin' plumb to the roots of my auburn. Pocketin' his roll he jeers sarcastic:

"The way you puts it, I conceeds I has to take down my money, though when I sets in my chips I wasn't dead certain I has a cinch, for I was only figurin' on your past performances, which I calculates is exact ten to one in my favor, that bein' the number of eligibles heretofore strayin' to these feedin' grounds. And"—his laugh is good-humored contagious—"course I knows, too, that constitutional you can't no more keep from proposin' to double-team with a good-lookin' woman than you can help drawin' your breath." Which tickles me into grinnin'.

"I admits, doc, that I am some rapid in my *affaires dew koor.*" My bank dealer bein' French I nat'ral picks up a lot of *parlay voo* classics that frequent keeps me from boggin' down for want of the exact Angler Saxon equivilant. "But, you see, I'm a absolute believer in love at first sight, which I holds to be the true proof of affinity 'tween the sexes."

"I guess, Red"—the pill-mixer's tone is in my jedgment superfluous caustic—"that temperamental you can't help regardin' any onhitched petticoat, that won't stop a clock to look at, as your soul's mate; and I certain hopes that some day you'll find one who tells you that what she's dreamed of by night and sighed for by day is a overweight, freckle-faced, carrot-headed gent, whose name I don't mention for fear of hurtin' a old friend's feelin's."

But I'm frothin' helpless, for that insultin' sawbones anticipatin' the natoore of my answer has his forty-five on the bar with the muzzle lined accurate at my ragin' breast.

"Keep ca'm; keep ca'm," he chuckles in sech a comical tone that I can't help laughin' spite of myself, though I feels more'n half like murderin' him for, it's got so of late that every gent, who gets to fencin' oral with me, considers it's perfect legitimate for him to make some fling on my appearance personal; and while I has to admit that my features is what Frenchy terms *"bizair,"* still I then and there makes up my mind that 'fore long I'll post a notice statin' that whisky and chips'll be refused to any man who reflects derogatory on what I can't help carryin' round with me; for I feels confident sech a rule'll stop it quicker'n actooal shootin'.

Then as if to kind of rub it in doc turns and drops a twenty-case note on the high card coppered and the king of clubs instant shows its black, ugly mug. Now, he don't often speculate successful and, if I hadn't been so sore over his recent guyin', I'd 'a' never give the winnin' of his bet a second thought but, as I sees him fatten his bank roll, it makes me that hot to think that I has not only had to stand his insults but is seemin' obliged to pay him for 'em to boot, that I flares sarcastic:

"I sure hates to see a gent pikin' at my game who ain't got nerve enough to crowd his luck."

He sort of flushes at the laugh that comes from some of the boys and stands nervous chawin' at his straw lip. Then he digs up his roll and plants himself for action. My red-headed disposition has theretofore got me into lots of trouble but, for acoote financial sorrer, this fool break of mine remains onequaled in my up and down career. It ain't five minutes till he's bettin' the limit—a hundred to cases and two hundred to doubles—and I'm in the lookout myself. And the way my money is slidin' over to that pet of Fortoone in the shape of checks is givin' me heart disease. Then comes the turn and that glitterin'-eyed towhead near causes me to fall dead by placin' five two-hundred case yaller-star chips tilted from king to queen, a exclaimin' caustic:

"I'm plumb weary of playin' this shoestring game and desires your infant's limit removed so I can make this little call."

Frenchy twists his pointed, black mustache as his bead eyes glance up to me inquirin' and, rather than stand the joshin' I'll have to take if I de-

clines, I nods affirmative; though, spite of the chances bein' five to one agin' his bein' right, my sinkin' heart tells me I'm practical presentin' him with a extry three thousand by so doin'. And the dealer's slim finger slides off the coverin' card and I sees that same ugly mug leerin' up at me that doc starts his winnin' on.

"Hold the deal," yells sawbones a-stackin' every chip he's got left—a even three thousand—on the queen to win.

But as it's now only even whether that card or an ace is goin' to show I feels entire justified in declinin' sech a onheard-of bet, which I does by tryin' my best to make my tone facetious.

"I never sees you quit winner yet, doc"—if my lips wasn't tremblin' then my insides belies me—"and as the box'll be turned over for repairs immediate, win or lose, this lets you take home the change you wants to so rash venture on the concealed lady."

And the black king slides off a-disclosin' the queen of hearts, which I thinks smiles into that lucky pill-man's excited face as if her wink gives him to understand that she's Fortoone, herself, disguised for the special purpose of directin' his hand in the placin' of his bets.

When he's proper banded what was my seven thousand, per custom, he calls everybody up for drinks. Then he laughs into my throbbin' ear:

"I ain't feelin' near so worried 'bout the futoore as I was, Red, thanks to your kind suggestion, though I still hopes some gent'll succeed in persuadin' the medical lady to exchange writin' pill formulars for the dish rag and duster, which to my mind is the nat'ral tools of her sex."

Then he walks off to plant his winnin's with Fay, who he won't even let wash the dishes 'less he's on hand to wipe 'em for her.

I'm a-gloomin' over the greasy tents and rough-board shacks which thin-spreads themselves along the crooked, bare foot of old Baldy Butte that pokes its five hundred feet of dirt, lignite, and rock above Hell's Kitchen's sunburned head, when I sees the doctress climbin' to the saddle. And as I knows they ain't nothin' in chawin' the bitter cud of regret I lets go my carrot stubs and the next minute I tells her I needs air bad, too.

"I'm awful sorry," she flushes, deft punchin' a big-headed silver picket pin through the gray straw which jaunty rides her shinin', brown hair, "but it jest accidental happens that a gent from down the river is in camp, and"—her color increases as her slim fingers proper adjusts her blue-trimmed hat, which she seems to think ain't settin' jest straight—"I s'pose I'll have to go with him seein' he asks me first."

Then my eye glimpses old Mart Lowe's son Bob, who comes flyin' out of the Palace stable as she leans over and whispers, *sotter voshe:*

"Though, course, that ain't no reason why you shouldn't go with us."

But seein' her tone is sech that I full understands she'd cheerful shove that long hatpin through me if I does I tactful declines her nominal invite by laughin':

"There is times when a feller don't lose no affection by bein' absent and 'less it grieves you onduly I think I'll not exercise my bronc this afternoon."

And her gay peal as she gallops off to meet the kid satisfies me that I ain't made no mistake in regardin' myself as a entire onnecessary card in the hand that's bein' played from Love's old deck.

"Seems like every Jack but me kin find his Gill," I jealous mooses as I watches that pair of young hot-bloods go flyin' down the dusty trail, which winds along the yaller waters of the Little Missouri as it tumbles rapid northeastward to put more colorin' into its Big Muddy brother. But I ain't never downcast for long at a time and abandonin' vain repinin's agin' Fate, I meanders for the Road to Hell to see if Frenchy thinks it's safe to start his box to workin' ag'in.

From that day the doctress and Bob devotes a lot of time to each other; and a blind man can see that both of 'em has a terrible attack of the soft disease.

"What's old Mart goin' to do when he gets a tip to this interestin' game we're daily witnessin'?" is the general question for discussin' over my bar and round the faro table, which, I is pleased to state, is now near recooperated from the almost fatal assault sawbones makes agin' its vitals; and, I am more pleased to say that in sech revivin' doc has been liberal enough to contribute material.

It's universal agreed that Bob's dad won't hear for a minute to the boy's doublin' up with the medic female, because we all knows that the old gent plans to marry him to a down east spinster of the aged division, whose years is in Mart's eyes offset by a exceptional long bank account. And the view of the camp is that if the boy don't splice 'cordin' to the old man's idees the kid'll be disinherited sure. So the bettin' is turnin' almost exclusive on whether Bob'll choose his own mate with love in a shack or weaken and fly to the arms of bones and money. But, the black-haired young rooster bein' mighty popular, the odds is eight to five that when it gets to a show-down he'll prove himself a actooal man in all his sixty-eight inches of well-knit bone and muscle; though, course, there is them that's grabbin' the short end agin' him spite of their likin', sech gents holdin' that 'tain't reasonable to s'pose he'll give up a three hundred thousand bank roll for a female whose face is her only fortune.

On the other hand—barrin' Doc White and me—it's believed unanimous that the medical lady'll take the boy, dad or no dad, as it's figured that she's not only head over with the kid, but that she's likewise 'bout as shrewd a female as ever travels, and it's calculated she's sure to rely on her ability to patch the breach so that the kid'll ultimate get the old man's roll jest the same; and three to one is the odds backin' this opinion.

Things has now got to fever heat, for everybody has down all their spare chips one way or the other, so we're all dead anxious for action on our money.

Then one day sawbones strolls in and whispers in my eager ear:

"From what Fay just tells me seems like we has got a strong look-in for this one to three money we has been investin' on this female disciple of Esculapius."

I'm near explodin' for his news, but he's tantalizin' slow in the way he stirs his sweet'nin', and as I'm 'fraid to cuss him for fear he'll leave without tellin' me what it is his wife's said, I just has to remain speechless till he finishes. Then he slow wipes his silk straw lip 'fore he grins, startin' for the door:

"But as you ain't curious enough to even ask what 'tis I hears I won't say nothin' more."

"Come back here double quick!" I hollers facetious ferocious, haulin' out my gun, "and talk rapid, too, or I'll make your woman a widder and then marry her in the bargain."

Doc throws up his hands a-laughin':

"I don't fear death none whatever, but I can't bear to think of Fay's bein' hitched up for the rest of her life with sech a lookin' bab——"

But I halts him by solemn pointin' my gun at the writin' which I posts that mornin' under my old "Standard Time" clock which leers down at us from over the pine back bar.

Sawbones' brown eyes glints malicious amoozed as he reads:

SPESHUL NOTICE.

All further jokes derogatory to the appearance personal of the proprietor of this amoozement emporium will no longer be considered good saloon form; as what's fun for the boys is death on the frog. The past is forgive, but no drinks nor no chips will hereafter be sold or give away to any gent violatin' this *in-articular-mortis*-rule.

Then he critical glances over my bulgin' two hundred twenty like he careful inventories my points, and final, as his disconcertin' gaze rests on my burnin' freckles, he chuckles in 'bout the meanest tone I ever winces under:

"They ain't no man on earth, Red, who ever gets a square look at you but what'll justify you complete for postin'

sech a last-struggle notice." And 'fore I can grab the bottle away from him he pours out a drink and raisin' his glass he gurgles: "But I wants to advise you as a friend that I'm awful 'fraid that it won't be over a week 'fore the Road to Hell has to close for lack of custom as, in my ca'm jedgment, you asks more'n hooman natoore is capable of complyin' with."

His insultin' technical non-violatin' of the writin' shows me latent possibilities a-lurkin' in it that I never dreams of, and I'm that ragin' that I impulsive tears it from the bare boards and stamps it under foot.

"To parerphrase the immortal Bill," comes doc's raspin' falsetter, "now that Adonis is himself again, we'll purceed to business."

And as there seemin' ain't no way for me to play even I lends him my ears and final has my curiosity satisfied.

"As you knows, Red"—his draggin' tone is provokin' slow—"the editor gent's wife and this medical female is bosoms; Fay and the literary's mate bein' dittos, it nat'ral follers that my better half can't rest easy till she puts me wise to the layout as it's present spread 'tween Bob and the lady we has our checks on."

Then he relieves my cravin's by tellin' me substantial, that, the night before, the kid asks the doctress to 'lope with him, as he's 'fraid to ask the old man's blessin' knowin' that what he'll get'll be a round cussin' instead. But the mistress of his lovin' heart refuses pointblank to make a runaway match of it and declares positive that the splicin' 'll take place with his dad's consent or not at all.

"And the kid," laughs doc, "has probable faced some mighty profane music 'fore this, for he rides off a-declarin' he'll force the old gent to say yes if he has to strangle him to do it."

"Which certain proves Bob to be a mighty high-tempered youth," I purrs complacent, for it looks as if I was goin' to whipsaw the turn, and I has up enough to feel more'n a passin' interest in the result. Glancin' out I sees a cloud of alkali dust risin' over old Baldy's instep; the next minute the kid comes flyin' up the trail as though the devil was after him and heads straight for his love's drygoods box office. And it goes without sayin' that sawbones and me keeps our eyes glued on that onpainted shack mighty attentive, although it's near an hour 'fore there's any further visible develerpments in the play.

Then Bob flies out and we sees from the way he's clenchin' his hands that the kid is bad worked up over somethin' that's took place 'tween 'em. But, course, what it is we don't actooal know. Flingin' himself to the saddle the boy digs the steel into that astounded, rebellin' mustang, which instanter goes buckin' homeward in a style that I never theretofore believes possible for hoss flesh to accomplish. But it might jest as well have tried to get rid of a woodtick as that love-distracted youth, who sets its curvin' back as easy as if he was only soothin' his feelin's in a rockin'-chair.

At last the kid sudden seems to realize that his pony is humpin' itself to unload him and, yankin' the scared brute's head from 'tween its forelegs, he whacks it over the ears with his big white hat as he digs in the spur and lets out a yell, which three-cornered combination starts that outraged bronc on a quarter sprint that sure makes a new world record if it had been timed official.

"I'm a layin' two hundred even money," remarks doc speculative inquirin' as that marvel of a bronco buster shoots out of sight, "that Hymen's services ain't goin' to be needed, for 'less I misses my guess bad old Mart has put his foot down agin' the kid's amorous desires and my female competitor has refused to agree to the splicin' agin' the old gent's orders."

But as this idee likewise expresses my own opinion I declines to ante, which saves me a star-yeller check, for just as night is mellerin' the buttes into cone-like ghosts we learns, *vier* Fay, that this diagnosis of Bob's symptoms is exactly correct. And from

what doc's wife says I guess the medic lady's actooal reason for refusin' to hitch up with the kid—dad or no dad—is 'cause she's afraid that ultimate her lover may bitter regret givin' up a fortune for her passin' charms. But whatever is her controllin' idee she certain makes a complete job of the thing, for she tells the boy she'll never have nothin' more to do with him 'less his dad personal asks her to.

And the next thing we hears is that Bob and old man Lowe has had another quarrel over the matter, which results in the kid's decampin' for Montany a-swearin' he'll never set eyes on the old gent ag'in. We gets news of the latest play, a few days after it happens, through one of Mart's cow punchers, who sails into camp to get Doc White to take the trail gallopin' to meet the wagon which is bringin' in the old man, who's that mornin' had a fit and looks like he was 'bout all in.

"Seein' he's my only remainin' patient," joshes sawbones as he throws on his saddle, "I don't wish him no bad luck, though if Providence sees proper to remove him I sha'n't mourn onduly, for that not only clears the thorns from the rough path of this lovesick pair but it likewise restores me to general practice."

But the "divinity that shapes our ends" regardless has picked out another pill mixer for the oncomin' sick man, and a copy of Larry's *Bad Lands Civilizer* which at that tick blows agin' the nose of doc's pony is its onreasonin' instrument. For, as the rustlin' paper curls 'fore the bulgin', oneducated eyes of that snortin' bronc, it executes a side jump that's as sudden in results as Jersey lightnin' and in a flash sawbones lands on a piece of scantlin' which cracks the bone of his off leg like it's made of glass.

"It's broke all right," half groans that nervy gent as I lifts him to his sound hoof. And grittin' his teeth he does his best to grin. "Seems as though the Lord clear designs that, willin' or onwillin', everybody on the Range is due to become patients of this disturbin' female; and soon as you gets me into the house you better waltz over and start her down the trail to look after the gent, who I now bets one to four ultimate consents to become her father-in-law."

"'Count of your mind bein' apparent onbalanced by this fractoored limb of your'n," I laughs as I three-quarters carries him along, "it seems like stealin' to take your money, but if you thinks it relieves your sufferin' any, I cheerful lays you eight hundred to two that this diagnosis, per customary with your perfesh, is—total wrong."

"Which fool slanderin' of the world's life-savin' crew I emphatic repudiates, and backs my 'pinion by acceptin' the bet," he groans as his game leg accidental thumps agin' the door casin' while Fay's a-helpin' me get him inside.

Then I flies for the doctress. As I spreads the cards for her, she throws a little black case into her handbag and starts runnin' for doc's house a-tellin' me to have somebody get her pony ready as she wants me to foller her immediate. But I mere hollers to a gent to not only get hers, but mine also, and then trails close on her heels.

"Don't lose no time in monkeyin' with me," comes doc's expostulatin' tone, as I opens the door, "'cause minutes probable counts a lot more with the old man than they does with me."

But the brown head shakes as she motions to me a-sayin':

"It's just a simple fractoore and I don't think it'll take long to set and temporary splint it, which maybe saves you a sight of useless trouble hereafter."

And the next second I'm a tuggin' on his heel under her directin; and as the ponies is led to the door she laughs:

"A field job, doctor, but it'll answer till I get back."

And a tick later that nervy little female medic and me is raisin' a cloud of alkali dust that must have looked like a cyclone was twistin' along the trail. We covers 'bout six miles like the wind and I'm a-thinkin' of callin' for a slow-down, when we sights the wagon ambulance as it crawls over the

steep hump of a butte a quarter or so ahead.

And in less 'n two minutes that cool-headed doctress is industrious workin' over old Mart, who's plumb unconscious and sure looks as though he's due to cross the divide. His gray-stubble jaws is sort of set but, with me helpin' her, she final gets somethin' down his throat which present puts a little color into his blue lips.

And, as the mules rounds Baldy into camp, the old man opens his heavy lids and stares dazed wonderin' into the alert face of the female who is so close watchin' his symptoms. Then his bushy brows drop and he don't open his black eyes ag'in till we lands him in bed at the Palace, where he lays perfect quiet for a spell, but final stares at her inquirin' as she puts a dose to his lips which he swallers mechanical as if he don't right onderstand what's goin' on. His questionin' gaze follers her around the room as she arranges things to her likin', and present he blurts out thick as though he's kind of tongue-tied:

"Be you this Bad Lands she doctor 'count of which my boy has run off and left me?"

His stumblin' words and the sort of childish, appealin' look on his seamed, drawn face makes me feel more'n half sorry for him, as it's plain he's took the kid's decampin' terrible to heart.

"Yes," she answers simple, puttin' another glass to his tremblin' mouth.

But he pushes it away and leers up at her suspicious as he mumbles:

"Maybe you're a-tryin' to poison me a-thinkin' you'll get Bob and his dad's money that way; but"—a ghastly grin puckerin' his deep wrinkles while his shakin' fingers fumbles inside his blue flannel shirt—"I warns you that murderin' me won't do you no good, for here's a dockiment"—his yaller hand trembles a big paper front of her gray eyes—"writ in my own hand and proper witnessed cuttin' off that runaway without a cent if he ever splices up with you."

She slight flushes at his insultin' insinooation, though she says nothing, but deliberate sips the mixture and puts it to his lips ag'in. The old man stares at her wild for a few seconds, then swallers the dose and slow shoves his will and testermant into his shirt pocket. He keeps his wide eyes fixed on her as long seemin' as he can, then heavy winkin' closes 'em and is soon fast asleep.

"Is he goin' to cash in?" I whispers anxious, for seein' he's made that sort of a will I'm 'fraid he's 'bout to be cut off in the midst of his sins without no chance to repent.

"He's had a bad stroke, but if we can keep him from gettin' over-excited I think with careful nursin' he'll pull through," is her soft answer as she places her slender fingers on his sun-scorched wrist and careful notes his pump action.

It's late in the evenin' when he wakes. I'm on watch with the lamp turned low and the drug outfit proper arranged for the occasion. As he opens his eyes I prompt shoves a glass at him, but he weak shakes his bald head and glances apprehensive 'bout the dim room 'fore sayin':

"I likes to talk a minute, Red, 'fore swallerin' that stuff." His tongue is some limberer than it was, so I takes chances, though I tells him to cut it short as it's strict agin' the medic lady's orders to 'low it. "I wants my boy here with me," his lean fingers nervous claspin', "but Bob's that pig-headed I knows he'll never come for my askin' 'less I consents to his hitchin' up with this she doctor, which," he feeble scowls, "I ain't never goin' to do. But"—his tone's jealous—"he's that infatuate over her that if she writes and asks him to, Bob'll come sure, though course you sees I can't ask her to send for him, kin I?"

"Argiment is absoloote barred under the rules, so"—my grin's equivocal—"drive ahead regardless of my idee."

"Well, what I wants is for you to get her to send for my kid without lettin' her know that I asks you to do it. Will yer?"

His weak voice is so eager appealin' that if I'd 'a' been a wooden Injun I

couldn't have said "no." Then a pleased smile lights his sunk cheeks and downin' his dose he soon falls asleep ag'in.

The next mornin' I mentions that the old man's a-frettin' for Bob and suggests to the doctress that she write askin' him to trail for camp 'fore his dad's light flickers out.

"From his present condition I judges there's no 'mediate danger of his dyin', but"—the soft light in her gray eyes looks as if she was part prescribin' for herself—"I agrees with you in thinkin' that Bob will be 'bout as good medicine as his father can have and—I'll write him to-day."

But three weeks drag on and no answer comes. Meantime old Mart continers to improve slow but steady. At first he asks me frequent if there's any word from the kid, then he stops and hardly ever says a thing seemin' like he's in a brown study, though quite often he smiles to hisself as if he's pleased at some funny idee which is borin' itself through his wakenin' brain. But he's never so much as spoke to the medic lady ag'in—'ceptin' to pass the time of day—who for now near a month has been givin' him her onwearyin' attention, though of late he close watches her through his half-shut lids as if she has somethin' to do with the peculiar smile which usual softens his wrinkles at sech times.

But at last the old gent asks the doctress how long she thinks it'll be 'fore he can be up and around. And when she tells him she was thinkin' of lettin' him set up a spell the next day, he acts as tickled as a child but says nothin' more.

"Does you think that bald headpiece of his'n is in proper workin' order?" I inquires that afternoon. "For it sort of strikes me," I laughs 'fore she has time to answer, "that Mart's a whole lot too subdooed to be real sane."

"Oh, I'm sure his mind ain't at all affected," she smiles, "but I think he misses Bob terrible; and," her broad brows knit in a anxious, puzzled frown, "I can't understand why I don't hear from him."

"He's probable way back in the Hills," I ventures, "and more'n likely ain't only just 'bout gettin' your letter now."

Which guess pans out to be correct, for that evenin' she gets word from the kid, sayin' he's only just heard from her and will foller his note on the next stage—two days later. I immediate carries the news to his dad and the old man brightens like he's got a new lease on life. He begins to talk as if he's never goin' to quit and winds up by vowin' that "she doctor or no she doctor" he intends to be up the first thing after breakfast 'count of a pile of writin' which he wants to get done 'fore the boy comes.

But he looks so bright the next mornin' that his medic adviser willin' allows him to have his way. And, as he don't now need continuous waitin' on, I puts the dinner bell at his elbow and leaves him to his work, which he takes up ag'in the next day; then a hour or two 'fore sundown he complains of bein' tired and goes to bed.

The old man asks the doctress and me to stay in the room till Bob shows up a-sayin' he's 'fraid if he is alone he may get onduly excited and have another stroke. The sun is flamin' the buttes so they seems like giant burnin' haycocks as the rollin' Concord rounds the fringe of willers for the ford. I hustles down to meet the kid, and soon as he plants his feet on the verandy I tells him where to come and perceeds him to the room.

"So the young bullhead is actooally here, is he?" kind of growls the old gent from his bolsterin' pillows.

Then Bob pokes his smooth, copper-tan mug through the door and his dark eyes fix theirselves on Mart hesitatin' and inquirin'.

"Does you see what you has brought your old dad to?" He half-roars his question. "And does you know, you young rascal"—he waves his skinny, yaller paw toward the female, who's shrunk back out of the line of the boy—"that if it hadn't been for this she doctor you'd 'a' now been a red-handed murderer?"

Bob kind of peeks round the door at the doctress, whose face is flamin', then he slow drops his black head as if he's tryin' to make up his mind whether his old man's sane or crazy, but he says nothin'; jest stands oneasy shiftin' his glance from his dad to his ladylove.

"Ain't you got a tongue in your head?" asks Mart, 'parently in sech a powerful rage that the doctress alarmed starts forward to try and ca'm him. But the old man imperative waves her back and hardly catchin' his breath he continers: "Well, I has one that's now in A1 workin' order and I wants you to listen mighty attentive to what it's goin' to tell you." And reaching inside his shirt he yanks out the paper which I mentions prior and inquires grim: "Does yer see this dockiment, Bob?" The kid nods and the old man goes on rapid: "Well, it's what I draws up the next day after you runs away from me; and it pervides that if you ever marries this doctor female you won't never get a cent of my bank roll. Does yer full understand the meanin' of that?"

"I certain does," flashes back the kid, his mouth settin' firm as the old man's himself, "but jest the same I'll cheerful marry her to-night if she'll have me. Won't you?" he pleads, turnin' his softenin' face to the now pale-faced little woman, who primary is the cause of all the trouble.

But she shakes her brown head, though she looks like she's near breakin' down under the strain she's bein' put to by this onreasonable old codger, who she's actooally pulled out of his grave.

Then the old gent waves another paper in the air which he has sly sneaked from under his piller.

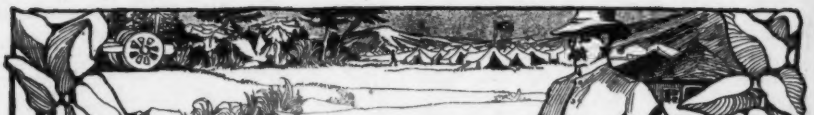
"Does yer see this one, you impoodent saucebox?" Bob sulky nods his beetlin' brows and the old man says, as that pecul'ar smile I mentions undulates his shinin' dome: "Well, this pervides some different." He pauses and I sees a hopeful look flash to the medic lady's face though it quick changes as Mart adds impressive slow: "For by this when I cashes in you is cut off absolute—splice or no splice."

Pausin', his shrewd black eyes narrer scans the changin' purty face of the doctress, who evident is strugglin' 'tween inclination and what she regards as duty. Then her cheeks flush and she sudden forgets that she's present only as a supposed check on the old gent's havin' another fit, for half stretchin' out her hands she says in that meller contralter:

"Seein' we're now on a equal footin', Bob, I'll ma——"

"Hold on; hold on," laughs the old man as he starts up, most forgettin' in his tickled excitement that he ain't proper dressed for company, " 'cause you may not want to be contracted to a pauper when you finds that, 'cordin' to this," flourishing his last paper, "I has willed everything I possesses at my death to—the she doctor who cures me."

But spite of the sudden change in her prospects there's a look in her joyous gray eyes as they flash to Bob, which makes me feel that I'm a total onnecessary witness to apparent impendin' proceedin's, so I instanter trails for doc's to apply my eight hundred dollar salve to that game leg of his'n.



The WARMTH of the VALLEY

By Quentin M. Drake

THE powers had ordained that at the nearest seaport to the post of Tarlaginan—twelve miles away—a wharf should be built. They also ordained that I. as the post quartermaster of Tarlaginan, should take charge of the construction of said wharf.

From the very start, when a derrick boom fell on the leg of my old friend Redfield, the brigadier general in command, and broke both leg and boom, things went wrong. It was foreordained that they should go wrong. All the men I had to work with, beside a few ex-mechanics detailed from the ranks and reluctantly acting as foremen, were a pestilent gang of ignorant Filipinos. If there was a way of doing a thing wrong, they'd find it. All the time I could spare from my duties at the post was employed in keeping things as nearly straight as I could. Especially was this true on steamer-day. The men had eyes for nothing but the little inter-island transport which, except for the telegraph, formed practically our only means of communication with the outside world. My eyes, therefore, were kept all the more strictly on the work, and I did not see what she landed—did not think of it. When at last she asthmatically kicked herself away, my body and voice alike were exhausted, and I found that I had sprung my favorite riding crop. I left the work in charge of a foreman then, and mounting, started on my homeward way.

A horse seems instinctively to feel the temper of his rider. Mine, that day, took of his own accord a gait for which not even his natural desire for stables and supper could account—one which, I flatter myself, few men of my girth and years would care to sit over that road. Therefore, it happened that I overtook a party which already was far on its way to the post.

In a basket phaeton, which I recognized as Redfield's property, sat three people; a man, young and not ill-looking with the gray chevrons of a commissary sergeant, who was driving, and two women, one elderly and one young. The younger had a pretty, silly face; the elder, evidently her mother, once must have possessed beauty of much the same quantity and kind. The latter, naturally enough, looked up as I passed, and in that glance there was a certain belated coquettishness which seemed to grasp with despairing determination after a youth which long since had taken its flight. By the side of the phaeton there rode another woman, young, but older than the one in the phaeton. I could only see in passing that she must be tall when standing, that her face was grave, its outlines pure, and that the eyes she turned on me were large and gray and steadfast. Completing the party was Philly, Redfield's granddaughter, whom I had known and loved from her babyhood, and with her, as usual, one Thomas

Pendale, a lieutenant of cavalry, who desired nothing so much as to become Redfield's grandson, and was in a fair way of making his desire good.

Simply lifting my hat, for the first time I touched my mount with the spurs and went by. I had gone but a little way, however, when I heard the rattle of hoofs behind me, and looking around saw that Philly was riding after me at the pace she commonly employed, which was as fast as her three-quarter-bred horse could lay his hoofs to the ground. It was not long before she was alongside. She rode lighter than I.

"Daddy Quentin, did you tell Major Brin what I asked you to?" she demanded severely, as soon as she came close enough.

"I—I'm afraid not, my dear," I stammered guiltily. "In fact, I don't remember that you gave me any message for Brinsley—Major Brin, as you call him—at all. I haven't seen you before since yesterday, you know, and you certainly gave no message for him then."

"No. It was this morning; I sent by an orderly—Dad's Dad scolded me for it. But I hadn't time to write you a note, so I just asked you to tell Major Brin that Mrs. Hopkins was coming on the steamer. If I'd have stopped to write, I'd have missed you. And—you see—well, I didn't like to tell Major Brin myself," she finished, with some hesitation.

"Didn't like to tell him! Why not?" I asked. "You and Brinsley always have been rather chummy. What has he done now to be cast from your good graces into the outer darkness?"

"Don't joke, please, Uncle Quent," she replied very seriously. "You know that next to Dad's Dad and you and Mary I love him better than any one else in the world."

"You shock me, Philly," said I. "Where does Pendale come in?"

"Oh, Tommy—Tommy's different, of course." As she answered, she colored, and a look came into her face that I had seen there before when "Tommy" had been mentioned.

As though to collect her thoughts, Philly rode along a little way without speaking. "It's because of Tommy and me—of the way we feel about each other—that I sent that message," she said at last. "I mean it's because of us two, you see, that I understood enough to send it. I don't want Major Brin to be more unhappy than he must."

"My dear little girl, what on earth are you talking about?" I queried, thoroughly puzzled. "Neither do I want Brinsley to be unhappy, for that matter. But what can Mrs. Hopkins have to do with it? Who in blazes *is* Mrs. Hopkins, anyway?"

"Don't you know—can't you see?" asked Philly in return. "Why do you suppose Major Brin never married?"

"It hasn't until now occurred to me to theorize about that question, my dear," I replied. "What's the answer? Mrs. Hopkins?"

"Yes," she answered seriously. "Only she wasn't Mrs. Hopkins then, of course. Her name was Lorilla Johnson. Major Brin loved her even before he was graduated from the academy. They were engaged for a long time, and then they quarreled, I think. Anyway, she married some one else—his name was James, and he was in the infantry—and—well, Major Brin has never married, as you know."

"Then James died or was divorced or something?" I suggested. "You haven't mentioned Hopkins yet, you know."

"He died. A little while after their marriage. Afterward she married again."

"She seems to have acquired the habit. What became of Hopkins? Is he dead, too?"

"Of course he isn't dead!" replied Philly, with some asperity. "He's Major Hopkins, the new commissary officer. You've met him, I know, for I saw you talking with him. And that's Mrs. Hopkins in the phaeton back there."

It is true that I had met this man Hopkins. It also is true that until that moment I had utterly forgotten him. I make it an invariable rule to forget

disagreeable things when I can. In his case, however, I had suspicions stronger than I usually allow uncorroborated suspicions to become that there was something more and worse than simply an offensive personality about this man. But that at the time was a detail not germane to the question in point. What filled me with amazement, not to say disgust, was the notion that Brinsley, a cynical, gray-headed major of cavalry —that Brinsley of all people—could ever, by any possibility, have cared for that preposterously smirking, elderly woman I had just passed. It was all but unbelievable; and that he still could cherish a sentiment of this sort was absolutely so. I said as much to Philly.

"'Grizzling locks the brain do clear,'" I finished, misquoting Thackeray's little poem.

"'Though there's snow on the mountain there still is warmth in the valley,' Daddy Quentin," said she. "That's a quotation, too, I think, though I don't know from what or whom. But anyway it expresses what I mean."

"Even so, my dear," I responded dryly. "Still it occurs to me that as there is a male Hopkins extant—very unpleasantly so, as one might say—that your Major Brin's young affections are rather effectually safeguarded, or at all events the object of them is."

Notwithstanding the speed of our horses, Philly leaned over and placed her little gloved hand in mine, at the same time looking wistfully up into my face.

"Don't talk that way, please, Uncle Quent," she begged. "Don't laugh at me. It's hard for me to say what I want to, especially to you, who know so much and yet don't think much of such things. But I do understand—I really do, for the reason I said, and so I know that, no matter how silly it all sounds to you, if Major Brin sees without warning her who used to be the Lorilla Johnson he used to know, it must be an awful shock to him. He hasn't seen her since she first was married. Just think how different she is now from what she was as he remembers her. Not that she's anything but nice now; I don't mean that," she hastened loyally to add. "Only that she's changed. Probably he thinks he's made allowance in his mind for those changes, but he hasn't really—he couldn't. The fact always must be different, of course; you can see that."

Truly there must be something more than I thought in that sentiment which I always had been inclined, mentally, to deride if it could teach such wisdom in the ways of the human heart to a girl of seventeen years. Differ from her conclusions I might, and did, but her innocent words were those of wisdom nevertheless.

"Let go of my hand and straighten in your saddle," said I rather crossly. "That brute of yours will have you off in another minute if you don't. Now what is it you want me to do in the way of chaperoning Brinsley?"

"I want you to go and see him; that's all, Uncle Quent," she said, obediently recovering her full seat. "See him and tell him that she has come and—and that there's a change, you know—oh, and all that. I want you to stand his friend. You know how far better than I can tell you. He's always looked up to you and admired you—you being a little older than he."

I laughed at this absurd bit of flattery; Philly must have known perfectly well that I was an officer in the service when Brinsley still was running about in knickerbockers. It pleased me, though, as all flattery, however absurd, always will please any man, no matter what he may say to the contrary.

"That young woman in the phaeton is Mrs. Hopkins' daughter, isn't she?" I asked.

"Yes. Her name is Lorilla, like her mother's."

"And the other? The one on horseback."

"She's a stepdaughter, the child of Mrs. Hopkins' first husband. Her name is Helen James. Isn't she a dear? I love her already."

"She seems passably attractive," I conceded. "She must be like her mother. Certainly she doesn't take

after any man who'd be fool enough to marry Mrs. Hopkins."

I was not reproved for this speech, as I expected to be. Instead Philly leaned out of her saddle again and squeezed my hand. "Then you'll do what I asked, won't you, Uncle Quent?" said she, and touching her horse with the spur, was away before I could reply.

It was a statement of fact, rather than a request, that she had made. Of course I would do as she asked or try to; that was a foregone conclusion, and to; that was a foregone conclusion.

Still I hardly knew how to go about the task that Philly had set me. For though Brinsley is not so old as his gray hair would lead one to believe, he is by no means a boy. Besides, I was anything but sure that Philly's information was accurate. Now that I came to think of it, I had heard at some time or other that it was on account of some old romance that Brinsley had remained single. But that meant nothing. There is not, I think, a bachelor officer of my acquaintance, including myself, of whom that tale has not been told. Still, if in this instance the tale should happen to be true, and I could be of any service, I wanted to be. I have a great regard for Brinsley. I could find out most easily, I concluded, by asking Brinsley to dinner.

It was almost dark when I reached the post. I resolved that instead of sending a *chit* I would take my invitation in person, thereby insuring its delivery. So, dismounting at my own door, I went on to Brinsley's quarters.

These quarters were in a native house, commandeered for the purpose, not far away. Brinsley's desire for privacy had always amounted almost to a mania. The house was dark when I reached it. Finding that I knocked in vain, I opened the door and struck a match. Brinsley's hat and swagger-stick lay on a table, where also lay the ghostly, dismembered carcass of some bird or other which Brinsley, following a distinctly unpleasant though perhaps scientific fad of his, was preparing for stuffing. But the man himself was nowhere to be seen. The match burned down to my fingers and scorched them, so that I dropped it hastily. Then, from below, through the cracks of the split bamboo floor, I caught a faint glimmer of light, so I went down the steps again, to the ground.

Like all houses in this benighted land, this one was built upon four legs, which lifted it ten feet or so from the ground. In this instance the space between these legs was enclosed by bamboo wattles. Peeping between these wattles, I saw my man.

He was seated on an overturned bucket, with a single lighted candle on the ground beside him, and a little heap of charred paper in front. Near the candle lay a thick packet of what evidently were letters, and old letters, too, for the paper showed even more yellow than the yellow candlelight. Brinsley, sitting in a grotesquely contorted attitude in order to get the light that came from below, was reading one of these letters. Even as I looked he straightened and with a sigh, touched the letter he had been reading to the candle flame, then laid it tenderly on the little pile of other letters that had gone before. I hastened away from my peephole as though I had been reading that letter over his shoulder, and coughing loudly, hurried around to the opening in the wattled partition. He looked up as I entered, without surprise and with only the trace of a sneer.

"So you've heard the story, have you, Drake?" he asked quietly.

"What story?" I asked in return, astonished and trying to gain time.

"You know well enough. That once, long ago, I made an ass of myself over a woman. Philly was your informant, I suppose. Undoubtedly young Pendale told her; his mother used to know both the woman and me when I was a cub. I don't think any others have heard details, and naturally I don't want them to. But then, Philly doesn't talk indiscriminately, thank God, and neither does Pendale. Of course you're safe enough."

"I didn't suppose you knew she—Mrs. Hopkins—was coming," I remarked, for want of something more sensible to say. "Philly didn't seem to think so."

Brinsley smiled, but it was not a spontaneous smile. "Of course I knew," said he. "Everybody knew who cared enough about the matter to look at the telegraph bulletin board. Philly told you, I imagine, to make assurance doubly sure that I shouldn't rest in ignorance—good little soul! But she needn't have minded. That affair has been over and done for more years than she has lived."

"I should imagine that it took place some time ago," I replied. "I caught a glimpse of the lady—a very short glimpse—as I was riding home. I doubt if that commissary chap will waste time in jealousy—in view of the fact that it all was over so long ago."

He had spoken lightly, but his effort in doing so had been evident. He did not seem to hear my reply, which I intended to be facetiously sarcastic, but oblivious even of my presence, turned once more to his packet of letters, opening them one by one, touching each to the flame of the candle as he did so, and watching it burn, his head resting on his hands. I knew then that Philly's instinct, or whatever it was that guided her, had not played her false, as, knowing Brinsley as I did, I thought that in this instance at least it might have done. Somehow it seemed immodest, this exposure of all that a man of his sort keeps most deeply hid in his mind, and I turned to go, but he stopped me.

"I wish you wouldn't," said he. "If you don't mind, that is. You know the worst of me now—or think you do. Know that a person you probably thought was a man will in reality show up like a calf of a schoolboy, when once his outside shell is scratched through. And like a schoolboy, I'd rather not be left alone."

I wished I could say something in deprecation of the bitterness with which he spoke of himself, but there was nothing to say. He had my deepest sympathy. I would have felt as he did, could I have been in his place. So I waited in silence until the last letter had become a crinkled, black ash, and he rose slowly from the bucket, looking down at it.

"I came over to fetch you home with me to dinner," I then said. "Have you finished? I wouldn't stop to dress if I were in your place."

Without remonstrance, in fact without comment of any kind, he walked along with me toward the old convent, where my quarters were. The night was a dark one, but in front of the door a big lantern shed a circle of light. With a rattle of wheels, the phaeton drove in and out of that circle of light, followed by the two who rode. I saw the party stop at the quarters of Sanford, a lieutenant colonel of infantry, and knew that he must have asked the strangers there for their first meal. Hopkins was quartered in the convent, near his stores, as I was.

I heard Brinsley draw a quick breath as it passed, like one who plunges into water that is unexpectedly cold; then he exhaled it slowly and followed me to my rooms where dinner already had been laid.

The coffee had been long removed and still we were sitting silently at the table when the sound of feet ascending the steps and of feminine voices told us that the Hopkins party had come to their quarters. With a word of excuse to Brinsley, I went over to offer any service which might be required to help them into their new domicile.

The door of their quarters was wide open, the interior brightly lighted. As Hopkins had been living there some time, there was furniture of sorts. Hopkins himself was nowhere to be seen. His wife was seated in a canvas lounging chair. She had taken off her bonnet and thrown it carelessly down, thus revealing an untidy head of wispy yellow hair streaked with gray, like a mixture of pumpkin and milk, and she wore that look of helpless appeal that one sometimes may see on the faces of young and very pretty girls, sure from experience that so long as a mas-

culine biped is within sight the appeal is not likely to go unanswered. The elder of the two girls moved quietly about the room, already busily installing the household goods, while the younger stood in a corner, her face sullen, in earnest conversation with the sergeant who had driven the phaeton. In conversation far too earnest when carried on between an enlisted man and the daughter of an officer. I resented it.

All these details I took in at a glance; then went in, and introducing myself to Mrs. Hopkins, proffered my services.

"It's so awfully kind of you, colonel, but really I can't tell you whether there's anything you can do or not. No one ever dreams of consulting poor little me," said she, with a coquettish giggle and a sidelong glance from her faded, china-blue eyes. "Helen is the one who will know. She always manages everything, and though it's a great comfort——"

Here the elder girl appeared, stemming for a moment her stepmother's torrent of words. "I'm Helen," she said, with a smile. "Helen James is my name. And though we're awfully obliged, there's nothing that I've seen so far that you can do. I'll tell you if anything develops later. In the meantime I'm very glad to meet you."

She smiled again and held out her hand. It was by no means a small hand, but it was an exceedingly well-shaped and capable one. Now that I had a chance to see this girl at close range, I found my first favorable impression amply verified. As I afterward learned, she was eight-and-twenty years of age, but looked younger. She was distinctly handsome, but what most impressed me was a certain wholesome sweetness that radiated from her like a perfume. I liked that girl from the first instant that I saw her, and am under the impression that I said as much, though I am not sure. At all events she laughed unembarrassedly and still holding my hand, turned to her stepsister.

"Lorilla, you haven't met Colonel Drake, I think. He's our chief quartermaster, you know, so you'll have to be nice to him."

Lorilla bowed with her eyelids and would have turned away, but then a sudden thought seemed to strike her. Catching the sergeant familiarly by the sleeve she dragged him forward.

"Harry, this is Colonel Drake," she said. "Colonel Drake, Sergeant Brown."

Now, I have been in the army for a good many years, as I said before, and during those years I have seen many strange things. But in all that time so unheard-of a proceeding as the introduction in an army post of a colonel and a sergeant—more than that, the introduction of a colonel *to* a sergeant—I never encountered before. Of course much might be forgiven the ignorance of a young girl, but I did not believe that this young girl acted in ignorance.

I did not at all like the look of that sergeant. In spite of its good looks his face seemed to express a shifty cunning that made me distrust him, and his military manners were execrable. I thought him the worst specimen of pampered, staff corps sergeant I had ever seen. Nevertheless, I was prepared to be rather sorry for him just then; he was placed in so very awkward a position, but any sympathy I might have felt vanished at once when I saw that the man evidently was in doubt what to do. Perhaps my face decided him. Anyway, after a little hesitation he got his heels together and saluted. I acknowledged the salute and turned away. Lorilla sniffed.

"I don't see why you have to act so stuffy," said she. "Harry comes from the same town that we do, and I've known him always. He's just as good as we are."

"Doubtless," I agreed. "Nevertheless, Miss Lorilla——"

"Don't mind—please don't mind," Helen broke in, laying her hand on my arm. "Lorilla doesn't understand. You see, her father wasn't appointed to the service until the war, and she's been in boarding school ever since. She

wasn't born in the service as I was, and doesn't understand its customs."

"And from what she's seen of the old customs, she thinks they're silly and snobbish, and she don't want to know any more about them," snapped Lorilla.

This seemed to leave nothing more to be said. Bowing to Lorilla, I shook hands with Helen. Mrs. Hopkins was still seated in the chair, wholly oblivious of what had taken place. Probably she was accustomed to little domestic interludes of this sort. I would have passed on, but she stopped me.

"Oh, colonel! They tell me that Mr. Brinsley—major, I hear he is now—is stationed here. Have you seen him lately? Do you know where he is now?"

"I saw him this evening," I replied. "He was going to dine out then, so I know he isn't at home."

"What a pity!" she exclaimed. "I do so want to see him. You know we're very old friends, colonel. More than friends, in the old time, in fact—you understand. Do tell him to come at once when you see him. I always thought I treated that poor boy badly, but I didn't suppose he'd take it to heart so that——"

"I'll give him your message," I interrupted. "In the meantime, I have a guest who is waiting for me, so I'll have to go, if there's nothing I can do for you."

When I returned, Brinsley was seated on the veranda outside my door, as I could tell by the glowing end of his cigar; it was too dark to see anything else.

"Drake, do you know that there's a regular whispering gallery between your rooms and the Hopkins quarters?" he asked, as I seated myself by his side. "I don't suppose it was intended by the old priests, like those two secret doors that were found, but I could hear every word that was said while you were in there. I came out here to avoid it."

"This is the first I've heard of it," I replied.

"No one happened to talk in there while you were in your rooms here, I suppose," said he, and then there was a pause, which at last he broke. "See here, Drake; you've seen her and talked with her now. I could hear, as I told you, and it was enough. I know how she must have appeared. I'm not entirely a fool, though doubtless you think so, and doubtless I was when first I met her. It was my first and only offense of the kind. I don't suppose you can even imagine what a difference—that is, how things were, then. But try. Go a quarter century back. I was a boy of twenty, and she five years older—then. What may appear ridiculous to you now didn't appear so to any one then. She was a little like what that daughter of hers is now, only prettier, and without that sulky look. If she hadn't a gigantic intellect, that isn't for a youngster of that age to notice in a pretty, jolly girl."

"You plead your case well, but there's no need of it, Brinsley," I replied. "There have been other boys, as you probably know, who have made fools of themselves over a pretty face. The fact that you didn't repeat the operation can hardly condemn you, certainly. I think I understand."

"I doubt if you do, Drake," was his response. "It isn't my case that I care to plead; that's a matter of no consequence. It's hers—hers and those girls'. I don't want you to laugh at that old woman, even though she may be silly. I want you to be a little sorry for her, and help her as much as you can. She's going to have a hard time in this post. They all are."

"Why?" I asked.

"Because the post—that is, the feminine portion of it, which is the only one that counts in things of this kind—will leave them very severely alone. The way that Lorilla girl goes on with the sergeant would be reason enough, if she goes on with it, as she will, for Hopkins won't stop it."

"Why, Brinsley, you're crazy!" said I. "Even Hopkins has sense enough to know that sort of thing won't do. Why won't he stop it?"

"Because he won't dare. His repu-

tation is none too good, Drake, but it's likely to be a great deal worse any minute. He was in Binalonan before he was here; you know that. Well, McKinnon, who succeeded him there, is a friend of mine and wrote to me the other day. Hopkins is crooked. You know that a native, living mostly on rice and *bagon*, will sell his soul if he happens to own one and there is a market for souls, if he can get certain kinds of our canned goods for it. Hopkins sold these canned goods, belonging to the government, to them, and that sergeant helped him. The commanding officer at Binalonan almost, but not quite, had evidence that would support charges. As there wasn't quite enough evidence for charges, they managed to get him transferred to this place. Anyhow, there is a certainty that while Hopkins was in that post the natives had all the condensed milk and stuff they wanted, but couldn't get them either before he went there or since he left. And though McKinnon found Hopkins' papers straight, every bit of wastage allowance and everything else had been taken advantage of, and McKinnon says that never in his life has he seen such a crippled stock as the one he took over. He's got to have most of it condemned."

"Well?" I asked, as he paused.

"Well, you see that he's got that sergeant here. He's going to try the same game again, and he'll get caught if he does. I mean to prevent his trying it if I can. No matter what his wife may seem to you, Drake, she once was something to me—everything, nearly—and I can't forget that. Don't you see?"

I nodded. Though the object of Brinsley's devotion might never really have existed as he saw it, yet this garrulous, elderly woman had, after all, inspired the ideal that he had loved so long and faithfully, and so still would command any aid or protection that he could give. I understood. It was not difficult to understand.

"Will you help me?" asked Brinsley.

"It's the duty of any officer to prevent stealing of government property if he can," I replied judicially. I did not care to have Brinsley suspect that I was moved in any way by sentiment in this matter, though I could not conceal from myself that such a charge would be true, to a degree. In fact I was thinking of how any family disgrace would affect Helen, and I had taken a fancy to Helen.

I fear that Brinsley was not greatly deceived, however, for he laughed a little, and bidding me a curt good night, rose and started to go. Halfway down the steps he halted and turned.

"I heard you talking to that Helen girl," he said. "What did you think of her?"

"I liked her," I replied.

"Rather inclined to run things, isn't she?"

"I don't know where those two brainless invertebrates would be if she didn't," I retorted rather hotly. "She has sense, if that's what you mean, and she's the only one of the trio that has."

Brinsley grunted and passed on. Those two speeches of his were not, it is true, either brilliant or profound, yet I thought a great deal about them before I went to bed that night.

All of Brinsley's predictions as to the social ostracism of the Hopkinses were fulfilled to the letter, and almost at once. It would be hard to say why, just at first. Hopkins was unpopular, it is true, and had a vaguely bad reputation in the post, but nothing that need interfere with the position of his womenkind. It was Lorilla's conduct with that sergeant which started the whole thing, I fancy. Ordinarily the fact that a non-commissioned officer of a department was seen frequently in the house of his chief would have caused no comment. But in the footing of this man there was a difference from that on which enlisted men usually are received which, though almost intangible, was felt by all.

Then Lorilla was seen walking with Sergeant Brown in a secluded spot, and this clinched the matter. Some of the elder officers, doubtless incited thereto by their wives, spoke of this to Hopkins, but he merely sneered and bade

them attend to their own affairs. In revenge for his unpopularity and that of his family he seemed to take delight in affronting us all by going counter to the most ordinary army usages. It was not until afterward that it occurred to me that he might have reason for this; that isolation best suited his plans.

Had Redfield been in a position to exercise his usual supervision over everything in the post, all this would have been different, but at his age, broken bones knit slowly; still, he was in nominal command, and old Colonel Dalton, the second, did not care to assume the responsibility of so delicate a matter as interfering, as it might appear, with an officer's administration of his own household.

Therefore the isolation of the Hopkins household became more and more complete. Even Philly, sweet and good as she was, would not condone this conduct of Lorilla's. Brought up in the service as she had been, it would appear to her rather worse than sacrilege. Despite the difference in their ages, she would have made friends with Helen had she been able, but Helen was almost fanatical in her loyalty to Lorilla, and would make no friendships that excluded her. Still, the society of that sulky, underbred girl and of her silly stepmother could not satisfy a young woman of Helen's calibre, and though she never by word or deed gave any indication of the fact, I knew that her life must be a most lonely one.

I encouraged her to come over to my part of the veranda when she could, and soon got to know her well, and to like her more and more. At first Mrs. Hopkins also used to come occasionally, and entertain us with accounts of her former conquests, notably that of Brinsley, but she soon stopped her visits. Lorilla attended to that, I imagine. Lorilla did not approve of me.

Brinsley, when the prattling voice of his former flame was heard from the veranda near my windows, would flee as he might from the wrath to come, but Helen's presence did not seem to act as a deterrent so far as he was concerned. More and more frequently I would find them there together, and then, like the diplomatic old party that I flatter myself I am, I would absent myself whenever I could without letting them know that I did.

At first I was curious to know what this man and woman, both of them rather silent by nature, could find to talk about so much, but when I did find out, I was rather disappointed. It appeared that in his hobby, certain phases of natural history, she also was interested, and this was the common ground upon which they first met. I learned it when Brinsley requested permission to bring his paraphernalia over to my place, in order to teach Helen the gentle art of mounting dried bird skins. With an internal wink I gave the desired leave gladly enough, and they were together a great deal more than ever before, after that.

The diversion did them both good. It got their minds off themselves, or rather, off the troubles, properly belonging to others, which each had shouldered. Helen had confided to me her concern about Lorilla. There was little doubt now in her mind that the affair with Sergeant Brown was a serious one, and Lorilla's father, though he did not approve, Helen told me, seemed strangely averse to interfering. I comforted her as best I could, but I fear my best was very bad indeed. By chance I had seen that which I never told, and so knew far better than she just how well founded her fears were.

Fortunately she never suspected the cause of Major Hopkins' reluctance to interfere with the intimacy of his daughter with this sergeant. Brinsley's suspicions, however, soon crystallized into moral certainties, so Brinsley, like Helen, was troubled; he knew, but could not prevent.

"The same thing that happened in Binalonan is happening here," he told me. "That beastly canned corned beef and the condensed milk is what the natives want, and they're getting it—plenty of it. You know that I've wandered around the country here, looking

for specimens, until I know it inch by inch. The woods are full of isolated native shacks, inhabited by ex-ladrones, who are 'ex' only because they daren't be anything else. Well, there isn't one of those shacks that hasn't a large and growing collection of empty tins around it. I've even found their distributing point, I think. It's at the foot of that tall palm, sticking up above the other trees at the foot of the hill over yonder. The ground around it is soft, and is covered with tracks, bare and shod."

"Have you found out how Hopkins gets all this stuff off his papers?" I asked. "He's not a brilliant person, but he has sense enough not to sell government stores for which his returns would hold him responsible."

"He gets the stuff off his papers, of course; there's no trouble in that," returned Brinsley testily. "He has a bunch of cases, both of milk and beef, that are bad, and he calls for a survey. A surveying officer is appointed; generally fat and easy-going old Sanford. He won't go very near the cases—they smell too loud—but he reports the stuff unserviceable, and it's condemned to be destroyed. The witnessing officer sees a bonfire that Hopkins has had lighted. He doesn't go too near it on account of the heat and smell both. But he certifies that the goods have been burned, though in the meantime they have been concealed so that they can be condemned again and again, and an equivalent amount of good stuff sold to the natives. Why, the trick's as old as the hills."

The trick, at all events, was as old as dishonest officers of our subsistence department; Brinsley had not needed to explain it to me so minutely. "If what you believe really is true, you ought not to have much trouble in catching Hopkins at his tricks," I said.

"Damn it! I don't want to catch him—don't you see?" cried Brinsley. "What I want is to stop his doing it. If I caught him the fat would all be in the fire for a surety, for I'd have to report him, of course, and that would mean a court-martial. A court-martial for theft, or under the eighth article, for making false returns. Think of the disgrace! Why, I don't believe that Helen James ever would hold up her head again."

He said this with perfect unconsciousness that there was anything funny in his choice of a name to mention in this connection, and with some difficulty I refrained from laughing, but coughed instead.

"I think perhaps I can prevent the necessity of a court-martial for a time, at least," said I. "I'll see about it now."

And so I did. I happened to know that at that moment some stores—doubtless the same ones referred to—were awaiting destruction, and a word from me had Brinsley appointed witnessing officer. Neither stench nor heat could discourage him, and those useful stores—doubtless the same ones he had spoken of—were at last destroyed without room for doubt or cavil. Afterward Brinsley shouldered his gun, and actually humming a little tune, went forth into the woods in order to replenish the stock of bird skins which the recent industry in taxidermy had sadly depleted. I leaned back in a long chair, and with the soothing consciousness of having done a good deed, I dozed.

I wonder if it was the doing of that good deed that tired me so. Probably it was. Anyway, I remained in that chair until dinner time, and then rose in a high good humor with myself and the world at large. It was not until I had finished and had settled myself once more in the chair that it occurred to me that I had seen nothing of Brinsley since he set out. Usually he would stop on his way back and show me his bag. And surely he must have returned before that, I thought; he would not stay out to shoot by moonlight, wonderfully bright as that moonlight was. Besides, he would have wanted his own dinner. So I sent a native servant to inquire, and settled back in my chair.

A few minutes later light footsteps sounded on the veranda, and Helen

spoke to me from the darkness of the shadowed veranda.

"Have you seen Lorilla?" she asked in a voice that trembled in spite of her effort to control it. "Have you seen her? This evening, I mean. Tell me."

I shook my head, which of course she could not see, but before I could speak, the servant I had sent to inquire concerning Brinsley came padding back on his bare feet.

"The *señor comandante* has not returned," said he, in his bad Spanish. "His dinner still waits and is spoiled. His servants are angry, and say they will no longer remain with him."

So explosively did I mention the place where I thought the servants had best go that the man vanished in some haste. I turned again to Helen. Frankly I was alarmed about Brinsley now, but I did not care to show it. By this time she had come into a patch of moonlight—moonlight that was no paler than the face it revealed.

"The *'señor comandante'* not returned! What major is it that has not returned—and from where?" she asked, in a husky whisper, so low that I could hardly hear the words, and I saw that she was trembling.

"What major? Brinsley," I answered, in as matter-of-fact a tone as I could assume. "He went out shooting, and has got belated somehow; that's all. Good heavens, child!" I added hastily. "Don't do that! What on earth is wrong?"

To my intense dismay she had dropped to the floor and was crouching there in a little heap, crying as never before had I heard a woman cry; the weeping of a strong woman, whose strength is all but spent, and who is unaccustomed to tears. She tried to tell me what I had asked, but at first her words were rendered unintelligible by the sobs that choked them. But I knew that she was the sort that would pull herself together, and so I waited. I was right. She was a long time about it though, poor thing, but at last her story came, in a torrent of words which even then were none too coherent, and made up mostly of self-reproaches.

It was her fault—all her fault—that Brinsley had not come home, she said, and if anything had happened to him, that was her fault, too. All, or nearly all, the stealing that had been going on was known to her, and had been almost from the first. The knowledge had preyed upon her night and day. Remonstrances had been of no avail. The last time she tried to remonstrate, Hopkins had cursed and struck her. She could not bring herself to betray those whose bread she ate. Then had come Lorilla's intimacy with that sergeant, and between the two Helen was all but distraught. All the night before she had paced her room, vainly trying to decide what she should do. That afternoon, thoroughly exhausted, she had lain down, and before she knew it, fallen asleep. When she had been waked, only a little time before, by the voices of Hopkins and the sergeant as they quarreled, Lorilla had gone, and Helen could find no trace of her. Some of her clothes were gone, too.

"But what has all this to do with Brinsley, Helen?" I asked, puzzled but alarmed. Her sobs stilled themselves absolutely for the moment, and she lifted her white face.

"Don't you suppose *I* know what he has done and is trying to do?" she asked, with low intensity. "Trying to do for us—for the nest of thieves to which I belong—in order that we may not reap what has been sown by one of our number. God may reward him for it; no one else can. God grant that he may not already have gone to that reward!"

This was purely hysterical, I thought, and so I spoke rather roughly, for in cases of hysteria roughness is best. Besides, she had frightened me seriously, now.

"Nonsense!" I exclaimed. "He's gone to the woods, and has been delayed. Pull yourself together, girl! You're not usually so foolish. Tell me just what you mean—if you mean anything definite."

"I mean that when Major Hopkins and Harry Brown quarreled, each blamed the other for clumsiness in allowing those condemned goods to be burned," she answered steadily. "I mean that both threatened Major Brinsley at first, and that afterward Harry went away threatening Major Hopkins as well. I know that the equivalent of those goods that were destroyed is ready, near that big palm, to be sold to some natives that were to meet Harry there to-night and buy them. And I fear—I know, almost—that Major Brinsley has stumbled upon those goods, or else has seen Lorilla and tried to turn her back, and has been——"

Once more her sobs choked her, but she had told me enough, now, and what she said chimed in all too well with my own fears and what I knew already. Still I tried to be reassuring.

"You're talking utter rubbish, my dear," said I. "I'll prove it to you in a little while. Don't be afraid; it all will come out right. You stay here and wait for me."

I hurried away, leaving her, and did a deal of thinking in the next few seconds. That Brinsley had gone to the tall palm, I had little doubt, knowing him as I did. Obviously, then, my only course was to go and see what had happened. My only doubt was as to whom I should take with me. It was not well to go alone, if it could be helped. Equally of course it would not be practicable to keep a party of any size from talking too much. Talking at all about this trip would be too much.

Time pressed, and the only man I could think of, and get at short notice, was old MacDonald, my sergeant, who had been in the cavalry with me, was hurt when I was, and exchanged into my department at the same time. He had been with me ever since, and would have followed me cheerfully and without questions into the infernal regions had I given the word, like the dour old Scotchman he was. He grumbled into his gray mustache, of course—he always did that—but buckled on his pistol none the less quickly for that, and hobbled off to get the horses. I had not changed my clothes; spurs and my own pistol were all that I needed; but when I came out on the veranda again, my heart sank within me, for Helen had gone.

There was no use wasting time looking for her. Well I knew what her objective would be. The only thing to do was to get there ahead of her. The horses came around at a gallop, MacDonald still tugging at his girth as he rode. I swung into my saddle, and followed by the sergeant, was away, leaving the roads and taking at a run to the footpath which, I knew, led nearly to the place where the palm lifted its feathered head above its fellows.

Through the damp, sweet-smelling night we rushed, I looking eagerly at every patch of moonlight that checkered the shadows of the trees for footprints, but found them only when we had gone a half-mile or more. They only crossed the path, but they were Helen's, evidently. She had run straight through the woods. MacDonald saw them, too, and though he did not know what they meant, he cursed horribly, and put spurs to his horse once more. A moment later he had overtaken me.

"Is it yon tall palm ye're bound for, cornel?" he asked. "If so, an' ye'll let me ride through the woods here, while you follow the path, we'll surround whoiver's there. I know the place. Will I go?"

I nodded assent, and he turned his horse aside, cursing again as the scream of a woman rent the air. Only one, but that was enough. It came from the vicinity of the tree, and I don't think I ever rode harder in my life than I did after hearing it. Once a man emerged from the woods, dodged across the path, and vanished on the other side. I thought the figure was that of Hopkins, but could not be sure and there was no time to stop. Then my horse, usually so surefooted, stumbled and fell headlong, throwing me heavily on the path ahead

of him. Millions of brilliant stars glimmered in my eyes, and for a time I knew no more.

How long this continued I never knew, but when I became conscious I found I was in an improvised litter of bamboo in which two natives, with many grunts, were carrying me. Then, one by one, other objects emerged from the mists that dimmed my eyes. I saw that another litter was carried ahead of mine, and that, with one hand resting upon it, Helen walked by its side, while in her other she held an army pistol. Between the two litters, Lorilla stumbled along, sobbing and mopping her eyes, but still clinging to a suitcase that banged heavily against us as she walked. Gaunt and gray, old MacDonald stalked by my side, and I could hear the horses following, as they had been trained to do. I tried to sit up, but MacDonald put his enormous hand on my chest and pressed me back again.

"Lie still," said he, and went on in the broad Scotch into which he always lapsed when especially earnest. "Ye're nae fit to walk yet; there'll be ower muckle o' wamblin' in yer heid."

"Is Major Brinsley hurt?" I demanded.

"Aye. But he's nane sae bad. 'Twas that lassie fand him, an' stopped the bleedin'. That ex-sergeant o' the subseestance didna like it whan the major cam' upon him sellin' goods. He gave the major nae time nor chance, but shot."

"*Ex*-sergeant? Why 'ex'?" I asked, puzzled.

"To be a sergeant a mon maun be leevin'," explained MacDonald patiently. "He maun be leevin', an' this Broon tried the same on me as what he die'd the major. He's back by the tree. We can sen' for him. There was some natives there, too. They're carryin' the twa of ye. They can be dealt wi' at leisure, for what wi' Miss Helen an' me, they'll no' get far awa' till we pit them under guarrd."

There was food for reflection in this. The sergeant was guilty, and the sergeant was dead. Let him bear the guilt, then, and for the sake of the helpless women let Hopkins go nominally free. I felt that the law could bear that much strain. Of course, I would see to it that the man resigned at once from the army. The more I thought of the scheme, the more it pleased me. Tumbling out of my litter, to the huge relief of the bearers, I staggered with swimming head up to that in which Brinsley was carried, intending to tell him my plan if he was well enough to hear it, but when I got abreast of his litter, I changed my mind.

He lay with closed eyes, white and still, but in both his hands was tightly clutched one of Helen's. She turned aside at my exclamation of pleased surprise, and I saw the color flow into what little of her face I could see. But Brinsley's eyes opened, the ghost of a sheepish smile appeared on his face, and he favored me with a labored but most elaborate wink. I allowed my litter to overtake me, and weak with surprise, rolled into it again.

"Sergeant," said I, after a little.

"Aye."

"We must be extra careful that only as much as we choose of what has taken place to-night should be allowed to leak out," said I. "I'll tell you why."

"There's nae need," said he.

Nevertheless, I went on.

"Major Hopkins, I think, will resign."

"Aye. I ken that," he answered placidly.

"And, to speak plainly, I think it likely that Miss Helen and Major Brinsley will——"

"Aye. I kennt that fine, lang syne," he interrupted, and then, to my intense astonishment, he quoted as Philly had done.

" 'Though there's snaw on the hills, yet there's aiblins warmth in the vales,' " said he.

The DULL LITTLE MAN

By WILL LEVINGTON COMFORT

MAXINE had a doll which was all her own, and then there was Mr. Kempis. The doll was patch-haired and not strong on knee action; Mr. Kempis was nearly eighty and blemished with richness and variety; but these two were Maxine's property. The fact that no one else coveted did not detract. The rest of the people in the child's sphere —which was a large and successful boarding house—were nice enough, but not to be handled.

Now, Maxine's mother was not dead, but for some reason or other in the world's affairs, the child had become a fixture in the establishment of her aunt, Mrs. Fealy, who was large and clean and honest, a talented mistress of pantry, cookery, and scrubbery staffs, a right good woman and a busy one. She loved Maxine, kept her gladly; but she was a mother of two who were grown, a boy and a girl whom other cities had caught and held. Beside, she had a cumulative memory of Fealy. Not for an instant can any aspersions be tolerated against the landlady, with her heart interest in the mails and the cemetery, with her forty to feed, and her ten or twelve colored folk to bludgeon or cherish through the day's work. Only Maxine learned self-support at seven, which is hurried.

Mr. Kempis smoked away the latest of his many Kentucky winters before the grate fire in one of Mrs. Fealy's rooms. He smoked a tobacco which he explained had been better in the days of his youth, but was still so good as to be superior to any of the newer brands. Often he went forth for air in the forenoon, thumping his staff before him, and meditated a while with his knees close to the little red-hot stove in the livery stable opposite. Between fragments of horse talk, which is the bone and hair of Kentucky conversation, Mr. Kempis would remark that it was a mighty pretty day, aside from the wind or the rain or the disorder underfoot. Some one would respond presently, between an observation on so-and-so's filly or what's-her-name's splint, that Mr. Kempis was quite right. The old man's room at the boarding house was always open and always warm. Maxine played there. The patch-haired doll, called Putta for unknown reasons, was also a familiar in the place, like the staff in the corner by the coal tongs.

"This is my side of the room and that's yours," Maxine would explain.

"Yes, ma'am," said Mr. Kempis regularly, nudging over a little farther toward the grate. "We both belong here, and we're both little children together —ain't it so, ma'am?" His voice always rose until it broke toward the end of a sentence, when Mr. Kempis would clear up the fragments and finish.

Maxine agreed, of course, and on some occasions would go to the drawer for a clean handkerchief, spying Mr. Kempis' which would have remained as faithful as the tobacco without somebody's help. Then she would give him Putta to hold and the old man would smoke the room dim with pleasure. It was all very quaint, and the world had no pull upon them.

In the heart of winter, the child, June, came. She was a sound, rosy, im-

perious being of four who took to Maxine with a love sudden and entire, as if she had had her for a playmate in another life. June's mother approved distantly of Mr. Kempis until one day she entered the smoke, and groped forth again into the hall dragging her own. It was impressed upon her then and there that Maxine would better play with June in her own suite—which prevailed.

Mr. Kempis finally begged for Putta to hold. His position was that his staff and he had been pining alone for days, the gusty weather and slippery pavements preventing pilgrimage to the livery stable. A man and his pipe, Mr. Kempis intimated, are friends as close as Paul and Silas, but even they had to part occasionally on separate appointments.

"June loves me," Maxine replied, with sorrow but with power. "Besides, you have me at meals and you can take Putta some—when June don't cry for her."

The little girl had accepted Putta as a part of Maxine and usually insisted upon the two calling together. So during the midwinter days Mr. Kempis had to be content with Maxine at meals. The table at which they sat was at the far dark end of the big dining room. The transients were mostly seated there, and the unmarried guests; mountaineers of colossal boots and hands; the bulk, in general, who were without inheritance or achievement. No one had his fixed chair at this long table, and the newest servant was assigned.

Now, June and her mother and father were given a small round table, secluded and attractive. Their only difficulty was that in crowded moments, a run-over was apt to be seated by Mrs. Fealy—with a whispered apology—in the fourth chair. This was disliked very much by June's mother, and the way out was suggested all unconsciously by the child, when during a certain supper she demanded the company of Maxine. So it came about that Maxine took her position at the fourth seat to prevent a scene and remained to keep out the uncertain stranger. Kentucky called it mighty pretty and humane on the part of June's parents, but Mr. Kempis was very, very disconsolate. The stock of handkerchiefs in his drawer needed no replenishing, and the winter wore on until March when the land began to take on the glory of its traditions.

Maxine prospered physically and learned table manners. She no longer lopped or nibbled or bolted; drank milk and forgot condiments; attended her teeth and shoulders and finger nails. Once June's father, a dull little man, leaned forward over his napkin to explain that one's stomach is not designed to be a receptacle for odds and ends like a workbasket, but that it is a clearing house for certified food of the realm, and if properly treated will bring peace and plenty and credit to the land. The dull little man added that if Maxine would eat fewer pancakes and more soup, her hair would curl and her cheeks grow red like June's, and that the eyes wouldn't fall out of her doll.

By the first of April Kentucky developed such a gorgeous climate that June's father and mother decided to go North. Indeed, the dull little man had been yearning for weeks to see his chicken farm again and to find out what certain collie mothers had brought forth in the winter whelpings. Letters from his properties could not satisfy. It was all arranged, and they were seated at dinner one day before Maxine entered. The man said:

"Seems weird to go North and leave that child here."

"What child?" June's mother asked, and there was hysteria in her tone.

He spelled it: "M-a-x-i-n-e."

"Jimmy, I tell you here and now, we are *not* going to take that child North with us!"

June was munching a cracker, unaroused. Maxine joined them.

"You know, you are always right, my dear," the dull little man resumed amicably, "only we are so awfully stingy and—er—she responds so to treatment."

Just then Mr. Kempis faltered

through the door with his staff, piped his "howdies" to June and Maxine, and took an open place at the table of the exceptions. The conversation went on clumsily evasive. No one noted at first that Maxine caught the trend and was battling with the knowledge that June —who loved her—was shortly to be taken away. The dazed, jerky fashion with which she finished her soup, however, attracted the attention of the dull little man and broke up his dream of the long Michigan summer which would soon be lying upon his real possessions.

When the meal was half finished, Maxine faltered that her aunt needed her. It was approaching June's nappy time and she suffered the departure. Her father did not fail to note the tight white look about the mouth of the boarding house child. His subconscious faculties began to work, even as he explained to June's mother that the Harrison Chief filly he had just bought ought to be a show mare when she put on another year.

"Oh, you weary me, Jimmy, with your animals—animals!"

Maxine was used to tragedies. She could bear this one, of course, but she wanted to bear it alone; wanted to begin it at once and get it into the past.

That night the dull little man was passing through the hall and noticed that Mr. Kempis' door was open. Maxine was there, playing with the patch-haired doll on her side of the room. Something impelled the man to enter and offer a cigar. The answering smile from Mr. Kempis warmed him.

"Maxine and me is children together," the old man explained.

"Isn't that good?" said the visitor, adding to the smoke which already dulled the light. "And say, Mr. Kempis, they tell me you like animals—I mean, good animals!"

"Yes, *sir!*"

"Why, say, I've got hundreds of hens that average three hundred eggs a year —up in Michigan!"

"An' I like dawgs," observed Mr. Kempis.

"Dogs!" exclaimed the dull little man. "Why, I've got all the dogs in the world—up in Michigan—collies—Ellwyn, Wishaw, Southport, Balgreggie collies—kings of their class!"

Mr. Kempis beamed.

"You see," explained June's father, "I've got a thousand acres up there and I—I like animals."

"I used to raise hawses," said Mr. Kempis, without regrets; indeed, as if he were grateful for the memory.

"Don't say anything," whispered June's father excitedly. "My wife doesn't know about only one, but I've got a carload of saddle stock, Chief and Chester and Squirrel strains—best in the world outside of Arabia—and I'm shipping them North to my Michigan place with a trainer. I'll catch it for a day or two from my wife, but the horses are worth it!"

Mr. Kempis shook with glee, nodded to his breast and back again, and blew forth interstellar spaces full of smoke. Maxine lost interest. It was her bedtime; and as no one came for her, she scrambled into Mr. Kempis' lap, with the confidence of one climbing into a familiar bed. She had learned to engineer her own griefs and had not sought June that afternoon, thinking it best to accustom herself to the vacancy-to-be.

"That must-a—that must-a be a pretty good place—that thousand acres o' yourn," Mr. Kempis said softly.

The dull little man did not answer. His eyes roved quickly from the tight, white little mouth to the wrinkled, beaming countenance above. Mr. Kempis had reached that great age when his joys could be quite impersonal.

"Yes, sir," he repeated low and jubilantly, "that farm o' yourn an' all them animals must be a pretty good place to live at!"

"And there's a big lake with a sloping, yellow, sandy beach," June's father whispered, rising. Then he added: "I wish you a very good night, sir."

June absorbed the truth the next morning, possibly sensed the migratory spirit in the air. Her decision was this:

"I 'on't go an' leave 'Axine!"

The above was delivered in the sleeping room. There was consternation and things were spelled; also there were hushes. The elder two had a quick conference in the hallway.

"Not a word more must even be whispered about it before June until we get away," the mother declared distractedly. "We must get on the train before she realizes and make the best of the scene in the Pullman. June is so unlike other children. It is perfectly ridiculous how she loves that forlorn child!"

In that last week of Kentucky, the dull little man had many affairs. Indeed, his activities cinched in the town mind the idea that he was a first-water capitalist. The trainer, the banker, Mrs. Fealy, certain of the guests, including Mr. Kempis and Maxine—all these and many more, occupied his hours. And then two days before the date set for leaving, he was called out of town. During his absence, the horse trainer needed him so badly and presented himself at his employer's rooms so frequently that June's mother was led to inquire into the truth—and learned about the carload lot of saddle horses. In the sumptuous presence of Mrs. Fealy she relaxed into grief.

"If he would only sell anything alive!" she moaned. "But he won't! If you offered Jimmy to-morrow twice what he paid to-day for a dog or a cow or a hen, he would get white and fidgetty and whimper that he couldn't bear to part with it! We are live stock poor—actually live stock poor—and now he's away in Cincinnati—Heaven knows what for—buying armadilloes probably!"

Mrs. Fealy was unnerved, but managed to reply that of all the boarders with whom she had ever dealt—and their number was thousands—June's father was among the pleasantest and most gentlemanly.

On the night before the noon of departure, the dull little man returned. He was always calm in victory. His demeanor now was especially slow and easy, as he placed in the lap of June's mother documents attesting to the sale of certain oil lands in Michigan, the amount for which ran well up into five figures. June's mother admired the manner and presence of money. A balm settled upon the trunk packing. The crime of the carload of sons and daughters of those old saddle aristocrats, Chief and Chester and Squirrel, was forgotten.

June was sent with Maxine into Mr. Kempis' room at nine the next morning to be spared the revelation which the last of the packing inevitably would furnish. She was not thought of until eleven, when the bus which was to take them to the depot was but fifteen minutes away. The trunks were already gone. It now developed that June was not in the building.

The bus rumbled up Main Street, loud as a lone bumblebee in a deserted summer kitchen, and still the child had not been found; neither was Mr. Kempis in his room. The mother was frantic; the dull little man pale but calm.

"My dear," he said masterfully, "June is not dead or mutilated. She is out to play somewhere—puffictly safe—and there are other trains. In fact, there is one at four this afternoon which will land us on the farm for dinner to-morrow"

"Go and find June!" the mother shrieked.

Mrs. Fealy came in weakly to inquire if Maxine had been there. She departed hastily.

An anguished whisper came from June's mother: "They understand! They are desperate from love for each other, and have gone away to kill themselves. I know children!"

"No, not that," the dull little man said, and added half coherently: "I always said, though, that they had an uncommon love for each other. And poor little Maxine! She answered so to good treatment, and really June sees something perfect in her."

He did not dare to look into the staring eyes of his wife who sat hunched and desolate on the edge of the bed.

"And Maxine—she is so sweet and wise for her age!" he faltered, fumbling with the door knob.

"Our Father in Heaven," the mother cried terribly, "are you still standing there? Go out and search! Get the police!"

He crossed the street to the livery barn, and a few minutes later, drove out the Harvardsburg pike exactly one mile. There he overtook another livery outfit. Indeed, the latter had halted by the way, and the figures of June, Maxine, and Mr. Kempis were not hard to discern at the edge of the pike, deep in the wild-bells and sweet grass. He sent Mr. Kempis back alone and took the children in his own buggy. And presently the dull little man had the joy of restoring the mother's soul.

"You see, my dear," he explained between her paroxysms, "poor old Kempis didn't understand. They gave him a rig at the stables to do an errand—he hangs round there, you know, my dear—and the poor old fellow in his dotage didn't quite understand we were going so soon. And say, the three of 'em were picking wild flowers and they *did* look pretty and appealing!"

June was gazing at the stripped room. Suddenly she burst into a scene of the furies. That Maxine must not be left behind was the impulse and the burden.

"Guess we'd better take Maxine along—for June!" the dull little man ventured.

June's mother raised her face from half cuddling, half repressing the clamoring mite in her arms.

"Do you suppose," she projected scornfully, between the tempests of June, "do you suppose that you can *buy* Maxine—like one of your fillies or collies?"

"Mrs. Fealy, my dear—Mrs. Fealy says we can take her."

"Do you suppose," was returned, with rising inflection, "that I would take Maxine on a temporary arrangement, and then have her mother call for her when we had begun to get attached—if such a thing were possible—to the child?"

The dull little man made a pretense of wiping dampness from his face to hide the twitch of his lips. "Maxine's mother," he replied, with a cough, "says an arrangement—er—may be made on a permanent basis."

"Maxine's mother—in Cincinnati!"

"You see, my dear, I had to go there about my oil wells. You see, my dear, awaiting your sanction——"

The squally din from June increased to such a pitch now that the man found it possible to steal forth into the hall. There, he wigwagged a signal of victory to Mrs. Fealy who stood at the far end, and made his way hastily out into the air.

At four that afternoon, the Northbound Pullman contained them all, even the boarding house child and Putta, the patch-haired. Mrs. Fealy finally had been disembraced and stood now—her ample face a blend of smiles and tears—outside the window with others of the town who refused to say good-by until the last moment.

There was still a nervous look upon the face of the dull little man. Even though the train moved, the air in the coach was hot and still. The porter had given them seats well forward.

"The smoke is actually thick here," complained June's mother. "It's like the——"

At this instant in the smoking compartment just ahead the old voice was piped: "Yes, *sir*—big farm up in Michigan! Hundreds o' hains an' dawgs, an' just shippin' twenty haid o' hawses ——" Then came the halting quaver as Mr. Kempis gathered himself to finish.

June's mother sank her head in the cushions.

"It's only for a visit," the dull little man said tremulously. "It ain't in nature for him to be with us long, and it seemed to me as if the good old man would just fit into that back stoop of ours with the honeysuckles. And, my dear, we're rich and we can't afford to be stingy."

"Our Father in Heaven, Jimmy," she gasped at length, "how you do love animals!"

It was all over, and easier far than he had anticipated.

AROUND THE BRIDGE TABLE



By Arthur Loring Bruce

"HONESTLY," said the lady of fashion to her sympathetic neighbor, "I rue the day that bridge was ever invented. It has absolutely wrecked the lives of four of my daughters—the youngest of them. People talk about the pitfalls of drink and cigarettes! What rubbish! These evils may do harm to some people, but their dangers are as nothing to the ravages which bridge has wrought upon my poor darlings. As you know, my dear, I have seven daughters—all of them sweet, attractive, and sympathetic. The three elder girls were less good-looking than the other four and yet they all married and married *well*. Their husbands are prosperous; their children are strong; their lives are full of interest and promise. But the other four are still on my hands."

"How do you account for it?" said the neighbor.

"How do I account for it? Why, bridge, of course! The beastly game wasn't known to the older girls. The consequence was that they spent their time sensibly and profitably—in flirting, dancing, fitting, visiting, going to the opera, and promenading the Avenue with young men, as all well-bred girls should. I brought Margot out in ninety-eight—result, one broker. Claire had a wonderfully brilliant season in nineteen hundred, and what is more, she has a corporation lawyer to show for it. In nineteen two my dear little Esmé made her début, very quietly, as, at that time, we were in mourning for my husband, you know, and yet, with all her handicap of black dresses and small dinners and sitting in the back of opera boxes, she was calmly working away like the beavers or the coral creatures, and building up a great career for herself. What happened? She was married in St. Bartholomew's. Her husband simply idolizes her and frequently comes home from his bank before seven o'clock simply to be with her and see the children before the motor comes to take them out to dine."

"Oh, well, the others will marry, too, you may be sure."

"Marry! Not a bit of it! They don't *want* to marry. They prefer to belong to bridge clubs and to sit glued for days to those wretched green tables, calling out: 'I make it without hearts,' 'I declare a Yarborough,' 'I'll raise you twice,' 'I'll go it without the dummy,' 'double slam,' and other idiotic remarks of that sort. I tell you that the game has utterly unsexed them. They wouldn't know how to flirt if they were to get the chance. They are inhuman—lacking in every feminine attribute. They can't even pass an evening sensibly in a conservatory. They are always sending the servants for the card table and the whole satanic paraphernalia of bridge. I'm not joking, really. I'm deadly serious! It's a great expense to keep four girls with large appetites and an unholy passion for bridge."

Whether or not this heart-breaking narrative was a little colored by the fretted mother in the telling I am unable to say, but it is certain that bridge in New York has, in many ways, revolutionized society. One proof of this

is the admission, into the politest circles, of men who would never be tolerated there were it not for their skill at the card table and their willingness to play for fairly high points.

I have often been amazed of late to see how politely certain vulgarians are treated by the most sensitive, refined, and charming women, simply because of their prowess at bridge.

While I am on this subject I cannot forbear relating a story which, though it sounds a little improbable, is none the less true. There is in New York a widow, who divides with a dozen other ladies the arduous work of leading its "smart" society. She is very beautiful, very accomplished, very rich, and very much sought after. A month or so ago she found that she had a free evening at home and decided, in the afternoon of the same day, to ask in enough people for dinner to make up two tables for bridge.

Now, it must be explained, before we go on with our story, that this sort of dinner in New York is usually arranged *in part* by the butler.

When the butler is told that madame needs three extra men to complete the revel, he rings up all the utility bachelors, either alphabetically or in the order of his personal preferences, and, if he is in luck, he may bag a brace before he has called up a dozen names.

On this particular occasion, however, the butler's luck was very bad. He had been told to secure two bachelors, but he had gone through the entire list of twenty deadheads and had been ignominiously skunked except for one "old reliable" who was never invited anywhere else and could always be depended upon to appear at any revel, eat heartily, join in every burst of laughter, and stay until the bitter end. The butler went to madame's maid and begged her to inform her mistress that he was "one whole gentleman shy." The maid listened, disappeared, and shortly returned.

"Madame says to telephone and ask Mr. Henry Gray, on Fifth Avenue. Tell him it is most important and madame implores him surely to come."

To the butler Mr. Gray was an entirely new "nomad." He looked in the printed telephone book; saw Mr. Henry Gray's name at seventy-five Fifth Avenue; connected with the gentleman by wire, and unctuously delivered the message:

"Mrs. A. Luvveley Creetcher desires to know if you will dine with her at half after eight this evening."

"Yes, sir; Mrs. Creetcher."

"At her residence, sir, three seventy two Fifth Avenue."

"I couldn't rightly say, sir, but she said it was very important and she hopes as how you would chuck everything and come, sir."

"Quite sure, sir. She mentioned your name most particular."

At about twenty minutes before nine, Mr. Henry Gray was announced in Mrs. Creetcher's cream and gold drawing room.

As my intelligent readers have doubtless already surmised, the gentleman was the wrong Mr. Gray. Instead of looking up into the wistful eyes of the tall, thin, elegant, pale, cultivated, mournful Henry Gray—our former secretary of legation at London, but now a nomad with chambers on Fifth Avenue and Forty-fourth Street—she found herself shaking hands with the ruddy, plump, genial, and perspiring Henry Gray, manager of the Vulcan Nickel Range Company, of Syracuse, with showrooms on the corner of Fifth Avenue and Fifteenth Street.

Mr. Gray saw that there was some mistake. "Your servant said, it was very important; so I came."

"Listen," said the beautiful lady. "I shall be frank with you. I meant to ask another man, but it was so good of you to come and I insist upon your staying. Will you do it to oblige me? Do you play bridge?"

"Can a kitten drink milk? But really, I don't think I ought to stay as I realize now——"

"Mrs. Fuller Frille and Mrs. Tweedale," announced the pompous butler.

At about nine o'clock the guests sat down to dinner.

Mr. Gray, who had been presented to everybody, was in fine feather and told several "good ones." After dinner a terrible thought occurred to the hostess; could Mr. Gray really play bridge? His answer had been enigmatical, at best. There were only seven if he couldn't, and two tables of four if he could. Mr. Gray reassured them all on this point.

"What—can I play bridge? Why, I eat it with a knife and fork." The inevitable tables were sent for and it soon became evident that Mr. Gray was a wonderful player and full of dash, imagination, intuition, and daring. The ladies were delighted with his game. Rarely had they seen so brilliant a partner—he was so good-natured, too, and so cheerful and kind.

Mrs. Creetcher decided that she would say nothing about the little misunderstanding in identity to any of her guests. Mrs. Tweedale, in particular, was so careful about meeting strangers; it would never do to tell her. The joke at her expense would resound and reverberate all over New York. Silence was wisest, after all.

Mr. Gray is to-day a great diner-out. His game, his stories, and his good nature have made for him a comfortable place in New York society.

The other evening, I was watching him play at Mrs. Tweedale's. He was joking and telling stories as usual, when his adversary dealt and left it to dummy who declared no trumps. Gray was the leader and picked up the following hand:

King, jack, 9, 3, of spades; queen, 9, 7, of hearts; king, jack, 6, of diamonds; ace, jack, 2, of clubs.

Dummy's hand when it went down, consisted of the queen, 8, 2, of spades; ace, king, 5, of hearts; ace, 10, of diamonds; king, queen, 10, 9, 6, of clubs.

Mr. Gray and his partner were ten, and their adversaries were twenty-two on the rubber game. Gray had led the three of spades; dummy played the eight; third hand played the ten and the dealer played a low diamond.

Third hand had applied the rule of eleven and he saw, at once, that the dealer must be void of spades, as the dealer's subsequent discard of a diamond proved. Third hand now returned the four of spades and Gray without an instant's hesitation, and still chatting happily with the onlookers, played his nine, allowing the queen to make in dummy.

This does not, at first, seem like a phenomenal exhibition of skill, but, considering everything, it was one of the cleverest and quickest plays I have ever seen at the bridge table. If my readers will stop to calculate they will see that Gray could easily have caught the queen in dummy by playing his king on the second trick and then leading the jack, but such a play would have hopelessly blocked his partner's spade suit and he could then be sure of only four spade tricks, whereas, by allowing the queen to make in dummy, he was certain of five spades as his partner was marked with six of the suit. In three seconds Gray had apparently noted the following facts:

(1) He could make five spade tricks by allowing dummy the second trick in the suit. (2) His partner could have no possible entry for his long spade if the suit ever became blocked. (3) There was no lead that dummy could make that would wreck his, Gray's, hand. (4) By unblocking his partner's spades the rubber could certainly be saved and probably won, whereas by blocking it the rubber might be saved but not won. His mind seemed very quickly and easily to grasp all these things as he continued talking good-naturedly to the bystanders. As a matter of fact, he won his two by cards and the rubber without much difficulty.

I have mentioned in the foregoing story the rule of eleven. I must add a few words about this uncanny and invaluable aid to bridge.

The rule of eleven is simple enough in practice, but it only applies, of course, to leads of the fourth best card

in a suit. Let us say that A. is the leader and that he invariably leads the fourth best card of his longest suit. Deduct the card led from eleven and the difference will be the number of cards in the remaining three hands that can take the card led. For instance: A. leads a two; there are nine cards outside of his own hand that will take it as two from eleven leaves nine. This rule is the only important, epoch-making discovery in whist during the last hundred years.

It is obvious, palpable, self-evident, and yet millions of people played whist for two hundred years and never discovered it. It was like Newton's apple. Everybody saw things falling about them, all over the world—apples, stocks, stars, feathers, reputations, shades of night, and meteors—but nobody stopped long enough to reason about it. I know thousands of bridge players who use the eleven rule in every hand they play and yet I have only met half a dozen people in all my life who understood why the uncanny thing should always work out correctly.

In reality, it is very simple—simpler than Newton's apple by far. If the fourth best card were *always* led, the lead of a jack would show that there was no card outside the leader's hand that could take it, because the only three higher cards are the ace, king and queen, and as the jack is the fourth best, it must be good against the board. Now, the jack is the eleventh card and therefore the key to the riddle. If the ten were led—from fourth best—there could only be one better card out; if the nine, two; and so on to the end.

The rule was first discovered in the early eighties by Mr. R. F. Foster, at present a resident in Brooklyn. It was years, however, before he could get anybody to make use of it. He was ridiculed and made fun of by most of his friends and pupils. Finally in eighteen hundred and eighty-nine he published the rule and from that time on its spread has been rapid. To-day, it is used all over the world by every bridge player of any pretensions. It is of course a far greater help in bridge than in whist, as the exposed dummy gives everybody a better chance to apply it than he would ever get in straight whist.

In the early eighties, the term "fourth best" was not in general use. People in those days used to lead the "penultimate" or the "antepenultimate." When Foster came to study these antepenultimate leads from suits of six cards, and penultimates from suits of five, he wrote out, opposite each hand—from which a high card would not be led—the high cards that were out against the leader. For instance, a player would lead the penultimate from K, J, 9, 7, 2, and the high cards against him were the A, Q, 10, 8, all higher than his penultimate lead—the 7. When Foster got about a hundred of these combinations written out, he could not help observing that the number of cards out against the leader was always the same when the penultimate was the same card. If a 7 was led, there were always four cards higher against the leader. If an 8, always three; if a 6 always five; and so on.

The difference between the card led being always the difference between the spots on that card and eleven, the rule followed easily.

The rule can, of course, be developed. For instance: If you lead third best, the card led must be deducted from twelve; second best, from thirteen; fifth best, from ten, etc., etc.

There has lately been waged a great discussion in print as to luck at bridge. An instance has been quoted of Mr. L. at the Turf Club in London who, for nineteen nights, rose a winner of upward of twenty pounds per night. This is luck indeed, but I have often thought that the vagaries of luck were a little more mysterious and perplexing than we are wont to suppose. Most players think that luck depends solely on the cards which are held jointly by them and their partners, but, in reality, luck at bridge may bless and brighten one in a dozen ways not usually taken into account and, conversely, it may torture and torment one in manners undreamt of and innumerable.

Let us consider a little the case of the imaginary Mr. A. (1) He may walk into the smoke-laden card room at his club and find himself a minute too late to cut into a rubber As a result he will go to another table where he will hold only the most atrocious cards. (2) He may cut for a partner and get the worst player at the table. (3) He may cut for the deal and lose it, and the adversaries may score game on their first deal. (4) His partner may be a good player—as a general rule—but some devil will prompt him to play ill while he is playing with A. (5) He may choose the wrong cards. (6) His adversaries may play stupidly and not in accordance with the rules, and yet that very stupidity will win them the game. (7) He may have two equal suits to open: if he opens his red suit he is lost; if he opens his black, he is saved; and he will inevitably open the red. (8) He may have nothing but winners in his hand and yet revoke inadvertently. (9) He may lose a big rubber and win three little ones, and yet be out on the day. (10) He may make it no trumps on three perfect suits and expect his dummy to supply his missing suit and the dummy is just as likely as not to give him no help in that suit at all. (11) He may win persistently at pennies and lose persistently at five cents or ten. (12) He may have doubled no trumps with nine spades to the ace, king, jack, and lead his ace only to find the queen third in the dummy. (13) He may find all the adversaries' trumps bunched in one hand and none in the other. (14) He may expose an ace or a king while dealing to himself and be called upon to deal again only to give himself a worthless hand, whereas his cards before had been enormous. (15) His suit may be blocked with an ace single in dummy, or he may have a long suit cleared in dummy with no way of getting in to make it. (16) He may forget whether or not a seven is good and his loss of memory may cost him the game, while his adversaries may forget similar things and even revoke and still win a big rubber. Had he won that particular trick with his seven the whole run of the cards might have altered for the rest of the day. (17) He may have a good hand and his partner may at the same time have nothing. (18) He may have enormous cards when it is the adversaries' turn to deal—and declare spades—or he may have wretched cards when it is his own turn to deal. (19) He may go to twenty-eight and stick there forever. (20) His hand may not fit his partner's; all the finesses go wrong. There is a grand slam in sight if the king of clubs is on the right and the king of hearts on the left. Inevitably they will be arranged in the other order. (21) He may false card ten times and each time it will bring disaster, but the opponents may false card forever without any serious damage to them. (22) He may take extras in the room and lose on his extras more than he has won on his own rubbers. (23) He may cut a good partner, rubber after rubber, they may both play perfectly, and yet they may lose them all. (24) He may declare spades protectively and find a hundred aces in the dummy. (25) He may carry his partner and *lose*, or be carried by him and *win*.

Skill and luck may carry the day, but skill without luck is far worse than luck without skill. Strangely enough, it is always the lucky player who is ready to swear that there is no such thing as luck. Such a player is sure to laugh good-naturedly at the idea of any one believing to the contrary. He may win twenty rubbers in succession and the chances of his winning twenty more are exactly as good as though he hadn't won any. The past in no way affects the future. In other words, his gains for six months have nothing to do with his probable gains or losses for the succeeding six. At the beginning of every rubber the chances are even, just as in tossing a coin the toss may have been tails for ten tosses and the chances for a head are no better than they were at the outset.

AN OLD PASSION

By Francis Willing Wharton

MRS. ROBLEY sat on a bench in Central Park and watched the stream of carriages go by. A leafy screen of bushes interposed between her and the wide sweep of the driveway and yet it was a spot whose privacy was not conspicuous. She sat there in the sunshine with a repose that lent dignity to her otherwise somewhat frivolous appearance, and cast no glances to the right or left.

Mrs. Robley might have seemed a mature twenty-five to the casual observer; years would have been laid on by fives as the observation became more interested, and would not have stopped far short of forty; and as a matter of fact, she was in her thirty-fifth year.

Life, however, had been a prolonged struggle to Mrs. Robley, a prolonged struggle for pleasure. Had it been a successful one? That is a difficult question to answer. She had had days, many days, of merriment and joy, she had taken pieces from her nights and glorified them also in the light of irresponsible pleasure, but there had been a seamy side to the picture. She had never had money to spend, except what some one had more wisely not have given her. Her lodgings had been always in the houses of her women friends, her pleasures generally laid at the door of some man.

There had been a year or two when the fact that Mr. Robley did not ask her to give him back his name, did not protect her from violent onslaught on her reputation; and she owed her present immunity from active slander partly to the fact that people were tired of calling her names. She had friends who never gave her up, and when Mr. Robley had died, a year before, she had suddenly abandoned her somewhat desperate way, and dropped into an even pace which closely resembled respectability.

The truth at bottom was that women trusted her and men understood her. She was a laughter-loving, healthy-minded, hot-blooded creature, who, having no children to look after and a husband who broke in a week every ideal of home and never even tried to pick up the pieces, found that she must play the game hard, and so did it.

She sat in the soft sunshine and looked up at the sky. A breeze stirred her veil a little. It was a beautifully adjusted affair, and she had a charming arrangement of black roses and straw on her head, for even in these days, Mrs. Robley's clothes were the delight or snare that they had ever been; you could use either word as it seemed good to you.

Her lustrous brown hair had the tinge of bronze-red that she still added to its thick waves, for the idea of being good to look at would not have left her had she been drowning, and the means remained only a question of time and money, not morality.

She heard a step on the gravel and with a slow, graceful motion of her head, turned and faced the advancing figure. He raised his hat, she bowed, and in a moment he was standing before her, in a silence that Mrs. Robley broke with a slight effort.

"Thank you for coming," she said. "I won't keep you very long."

"But do, I shall be delighted." He bowed again. "May I sit down?"

"Please."

She withdrew to her end of the bench. He took his. They were so economical that there was some space between them on which they neither of them seemed inclined to encroach. For a moment, Mrs. Robley fixed her gaze on the passing carriages, and opened and shut the sticks of her black satin fan. Her companion took respectful but intent stock of her; his deep-set, light-blue eyes traveled swiftly over her with a look at her hands, her feet, her dress, and then a quick, concentrated stare at her face. She turned toward him, and his expression turned to one of polite waiting.

"I am going to be preposterous enough to make a petition," she began slowly, "on no grounds, with no claims, with no sense of reason, but just because I feel I must. It is so long since we have done more than look at each other across a room that you have perhaps almost forgotten that we were—friends some years ago?"

Haviland shrugged his shoulders. How like a woman!

He spoke. "There may have been days in which you did not rise to my memory since," he said slowly, "but I cannot remember one."

Her eyes met his with a sudden startled look; then she turned them back to the scene before her.

"Really! I should not have asked a tithe of that," she said, with a sort of bitterness, "but I will plunge *in medias res.* I want you not to continue to devote yourself to Margaret Greyson." There was an instant of silence, then she went on hurriedly: "Do not misunderstand me. Margaret is, I know, one of the finest creatures in the world. She will do nothing wrong—unhappy, desperate as she is—but she will end by caring for you, perhaps, and certainly you will end by compromising her."

Haviland had big, clumsily modeled features which did not easily show emotion. His florid color deepened a little, that was all.

"My dear Mrs. Robley," he answered her slowly, and turned his shrewd eyes on her earnest face, "Mrs. Greyson and I are very good friends; I admire her; she is, as you say, a fine creature and a very beautiful woman. No man can see her struggling to make life bearable with that brute beside her and not want to help—I help. That's all. You have quite mistaken the situation."

She turned to him, and resting her arm on the back of the bench, leaned a little toward him. "Have I?" she said. "Have I? You once tried to make life more bearable to me. Do you think I don't remember the process?"

Their eyes met with a challenge in each. It brought a lovely color to her cheek, whose fine-skinned smoothness drew his eyes from the fire of hers. He wondered to see it as lovely as it had been. Her eyes had changed. There were signs of maturity, of age even, about her lips and eyes, but she had gained, too, the reserve, the reticence of experience; her thoughts had been so easy to read before.

"You remind me of the best action of my life," he said slowly. "When I left you. You have forgotten, perhaps, how abruptly I left you. You consoled yourself for the loss of my friendship very rapidly."

Again their eyes clashed. Her lips quivered. She obeyed her impulse.

"Did you not know——" Then she stopped.

He pressed his advantage.

"I knew so well what I was doing that I left you," he returned coolly. "The word friend was too mere a mockery to the feelings within me. It is just because I was so—so wise at thirty that I think you might trust me at forty. If I ever feel for Mrs. Greyson the beginning of what I felt toward you I will run away. Can you ask more?"

He was so coldly self-possessed that she struggled to imitate him.

"You do not understand," she answered, and stopped.

There was a long silence between them. The rattle and dash of the passing vehicles seemed apart from them. The breeze was soft, the air sparkling with the brilliant sunlight of late spring.

Haviland turned so that his elbow rested on the back of the bench, his cheek on his hand. It brought his eyes steadily to bear on her. They again took keen note of every detail of her appearance. She had no longer the bloom that had touched her cheeks and lips with such a miracle of youth. Her fine lines were hardened in places, refined in others, but she brought back a memory of the well-being that had always wrapped him as he sat beside her. To her he had a thousand things to say, there were so many things to laugh about with her, and yet she was the only woman he had ever desired to be serious with, and a wonder at his own strength of renunciation swept over him.

"What is it I do not understand?"

She remembered with a start the charm his speech had had, with his educated accent and depth of note, but by this time surely the tenderness that had lain in it had been addressed to so many women that it had grown mechanical. Was it so? She turned to him impetuously.

"How many women have you made love to since we parted? Tell me that!"

Haviland's face hardened.

"How many men have made love to you?"

She shrugged her shoulders. "Half a dozen. But answer me."

He folded his arms.

"Six, perhaps."

They stared at each other.

Haviland spoke. "Where we differ," he said slowly, "is just here. You have tried to amuse yourself with unbroken frivolity. I once had a deeper experience and my folly since has been, in part, trying to forget."

Her eyes blazed. She looked as she had never looked in her youth. He stared in admiration.

"I tried to amuse myself," she answered slowly, "yes, since you would not love me."

He bent those cold eyes of his on her.

"How dare you say that?"

"It is the truth." Her cheeks were crimson.

Haviland squared himself, his tightly closed fingers resting on his knees.

"And this is the reward for the one worthy act of my existence! You doubt my motive? I loved you so well that I would not try to ruin your life."

"So you broke my heart instead," said Mrs. Robley. And for an instant their eyes met; hers dropped, the color swept into her cheek, then died away.

Again Haviland rested his arm on the back of the bench, his cheek on his hand, and fixed his eyes on her. But their expression had changed. The hard lines of his heavily molded lips were set, but the lips quivered a little.

"When I went away," he said slowly, "they told me you were more charming than ever, gayer, merrier, in madder spirits."

Her lip curled. "Did I seem to you so spiritless that I would have been otherwise?"

There was another silence, and it was Mrs. Robley who broke it.

"All of this," she said rapidly, "is ancient history, and quite beside the point."

She hesitated. He interrupted her.

"Is it? How differently we look at it. You are not going to refer to your friend, Mrs. Greyson, again, are you? Because I shall be rude about her if you do."

Mrs. Robley rose. "Then," she remarked, "it is time for me to go. I have delivered myself of my friendly warning. People are beginning to talk, and when people talk about you do you know what it means?"

She looked down at him. He leaned back and looked up at her.

"No, what does it mean? This also is interesting," he said.

"It means," she returned, "that they say one of two things, either that the woman loves you too much or that you do not love her enough."

Haviland rose and stood beside her. "Their infernal tongues!" he said.

She shrugged her shoulders. "I never cared about their tongues," she answered, "but some people do. And Margaret is one of them. Well, goodby. I am going off for the summer, so

it will be a long good-by." She gave him a smile of dismissal and stood waiting for him to go. "I have a carriage coming for me," she said, "and it must be almost the hour."

Haviland looked at his watch. "It is five-twenty."

"I said five-thirty," said Mrs. Robley. "Good-by."

He slipped back the watch and stood looking down at her. "I have ten minutes," he remarked.

"Hardly. Janet is coming for me. I do not desire that my maneuvers should be so open." She smiled gayly. "Good-by."

He came a step closer to her and picked up the fan which was suspended by a gold chain from her waist.

"Then I have seven minutes," he said. "One can say a good deal in seven minutes."

She grew slightly paler. "One can," she smiled, "even too much."

He opened the sticks of the graceful toy he held. "Where do you go to-morrow?"

She watched him and gently gathered up the chain. "To Danvers."

"Whom do you stay with," asked Haviland.

Her color rose. "You remember my old habit of quartering myself on my good friends. I brought that to an end when William died. He left a little something in money and restored me a little something in self-respect. I go to a small hotel. It opens for me. I think"—she glanced toward the driveway—"the time must be up. Look at your watch."

"I refuse." He met her eyes and looked down into them. "You'll be alone there, more or less?"

Again her color rose. She gently possessed herself of her fan. "More or less," she answered. "Now, go away."

She stood off from him and raised her fan. "Go away. This interview was of my making, and I have a right to bring it to an end when I choose."

"A novel law in etiquette," retorted Haviland, smiling, "but I accept it. Only, when we have an interview of my making it is I who will decide its length.

Their eyes met.

He raised his hat. "I see Mrs. Walters coming. Good-by." And he took his way down a little green alley that led off among the trees.

Mrs. Robley walked round the clump of bushes and stood waiting on the edge of the drive.

"Am I late?" asked Mrs. Walters as she glanced at the woman who got in beside her. "You did say five-thirty, didn't you?"

"Just at the right moment, as usual," returned Mrs. Robley, and as they drove away she cast no look behind her.

II.

The beach at Sandbar was shaped like a half-moon, and at one of its horns a stone pier prolonged its point and gave some protection to the ferry-boat that brought its summer population from a dusty, hot, heavily laden train across the bay. At Sandbar on a summer's day every one frankly made the most of their month of seaside, and from ten o'clock in the morning gathered on the sand and laughed, chatted, bathed, and smoked, and not till one did they drift away to the two or three hotels in pursuit of luncheon.

Most of its frequenters were growing families, young ladies with ambitious fathers and mothers, and impecunious young men who had the American passion for salt water. Mrs. Robley, sitting on a shawl spread out on the clean yellow sand with two of the impecunious young men beside her, watched the crowd with amused eyes. She wore some stiff, white linen stuff which looked very *comme il faut* and made every one else look dowdy, and her wide black straw hat permitted her veil to surround her face and not to cover it.

Peters, who had reluctantly left Harvard that very summer, sat with his back to the sea gazing into her face with a sort of persistence that young men got into when they talked to this particular woman, and Dicey, five years

older and therefore five years less confident, tried to appear to be occasionally looking at something else. But they all three chatted pleasantly of their neighbors, and with the youthfulness which she had never shaken from her, she joined them in laughing at a number of small jokes.

It was half-past twelve o'clock, and Mrs. Robley suddenly took in the fact that neither of her companions was in his bathing clothes.

"Go and bathe," she said simply to Peters and he rose and obeyed her. "Go and bathe," she repeated to Dicey, but he made faint protest.

"I don't want to," he said. "I'd rather——"

"No, you wouldn't." She shook her head. "You think you would, but you wouldn't, you would feel dull all day without it. Remember that you and Alec lunch with me at one-thirty, and now I'll go to the pier and meet the boat, and see if that devil of a bootmaker has sent my slippers. Go and bathe!" And he went.

"How convenient it is," thought Mrs. Robley as she rose five minutes later and walked slowly along the beach with her sunshade raised above her, "how convenient it is to have very young admirers." Her lip curled a little—it would not have cheered Messrs. Dicey and Peters to see it. "How convenient it is," she went on in her thoughts as she picked her way over the stones to where the wire steps led to the pier, "to have no ties, no one in the world to have to explain to, or wait for or look for, or—long for—so convenient!" At this her lip curled again, but at herself. "I am"—she lifted her skirts and set a graceful well-shod foot on the lower step of the pier—"I am without bonds, without incumbrances, perfectly independent, and I must be very happy, of course." She mounted the steps slowly, and as she reached the top the color had welled up into her cheek and she looked too lovely to be lonely, and yet nothing can express how lonely she was.

She crossed the pier, walked along, and leaning on the stone parapet, waited for the big boat to come in. Resting her arms on the high parapet she stared absently at the crowd, and then turning, looked out to sea.

Again she sipped the cup of her isolation; there was no one who belonged to her. The boat brought her what? A pair of slippers!

She turned again to watch the crowd. By this time most of the people had gone on shore; there were a good many of them which was nice for the hotel people—she had always a friendly feeling for those strugglers for fortune—and with a little sigh she moved toward the boat to ask for her express package.

The sunshine was very bright on the white gravel that lay on the pier, and through its glare a man advanced toward her, and for once she believed her clear head had gone astray.

"A pure hallucination," she thought, and turning again to the parapet, laid one hand on it to steady herself.

"Whom did you expect?" said Haviland as with his hat in his hand he stood before her in the sunshine.

With her back against the parapet she faced him smiling. "Not you," she answered and he bowed.

"I did not suppose you had powers of prevoyance," he said coolly, "but where is he?"

Mrs. Robley still smiled and her heart began to beat more evenly.

"He didn't come," she said slowly, meeting his eyes full.

"I see," said Haviland, and there was silence. Then he added: "Well, shall we walk on or do you wait from boat to boat? The next one comes in at six."

She laughed with such gayety that his heart jumped and then sickened.

"I—er—can come back," she said and turned to walk out on the pier, then stopped. "How stupid I am!" she went on. "You don't want to walk here with me. You have a hotel to go to, a party to join, and so forth; I will walk back that way with you."

"You will not," said Haviland. "I have no hotel, no party. We will walk out on the pier's end and sit down and talk. That is, if you have time—he

can't come till six. But perhaps there are others?"

She walked on demurely beside him.

"No," she answered, "there are no others—there are young men, two or three, but they will keep and are on the whole a negligible quantity."

"Poor souls!" murmured Haviland, and they reached the end of the pier and sat down on the wide stone steps. "Poor souls!" he repeated. "They will keep, and even then they are negligible. Good Lord—and am I to suppose that as you were waiting for some one, I am negligible, too?"

She sat very still and longed to throw off her hat and let the breeze lift her hair, to walk down to the water and lave in it, to do something to bring her close to nature, and doing it to laugh and weep. Instead she smiled that joyous smile of hers.

"You will admit you would not keep, at any rate," she said, "unlike my nice negligible lads. You will stalk away instantly, I suppose, if I am not as it pleases you."

Their eyes met and Haviland leaned toward her.

"But you could not be other than as it pleases me," he said, "poor negligible me!" And he looked so full of power to get what he wanted in the world, so prosperously in command of life that the words charmed her.

She, too, leaned a little toward him, her eyes wide and shining. "Say it again," she said, "say it again! It is so delicious to hear you, when you know and I know——"

Haviland interrupted her. "You know—I know! What is it we both know? I know nothing except that ——" He stopped and turned from her. "I thought I should tell you what I know, but why should I? It would only be dull for you. Instead you will tell me why you let me come to Sandbar when you were expecting some one else. Why did you not tell me in the Park that day? Did you think you would like to see me only in the way?"

She was silent, looking out to sea and feeling suddenly that God was good.

"Answer me," Haviland went on, with passion. "Was it that? You felt that I would come and thought it fair I should taste what it was to be *de trop*. Well, perhaps it was fair, but it was not like you somehow, not a little bit like you—dear."

At the last word Mrs. Robley shivered; it frightened her, it reminded her of the time when he had used it before—when he was breaking with her. She felt with a sharp pang that it could never have been meant that she should have the real thing—she had had so many unreal things, had tricked herself out with gauds, and it was just perhaps that she should never have the real jewel lying on her breast. But, oh, how one could long for what one was not good enough to get!

"Don't," was all she said, and Haviland blazed.

"I must not trespass," he murmured. "Is that it? I must stand aside and hold my tongue! Who is this man? Tell me—I have to know."

She steadied herself with the help of that flash of bitter remembrance she had had; she meant nothing serious to him of course and something less than that she never again would endure.

"Why should I tell you everything?" she said, speaking with her deliberate accents, very sweet and low but poised out of his reach somehow. "Why should I? Think a moment, why?"

He looked at her a moment, then shrugged his heavy shoulders. "Why indeed?" he answered. "I forgot myself and presumed; I beg your pardon. No doubt those young men know what I may not ask; they are aware to whom they always yield precedence, but I have not even their privileges. I am not, as you said, one who will keep. You will get rid of me on the boat that comes in at six; exchange the bad coin that I am for another's gold."

He sneered to steady his voice, but Mrs. Robley who knew much could not know that; she took a painful breath.

"Well, then," she said, "as you go at six, let us be friends till then and not quarrel any more. Will you lunch with me and my lads? They must come, too, for I have asked them already—they

ask me so often. We lunch at the little clubhouse over there. Will you come?

There was silence, then Haviland spoke.

"Yes, I'll come," he said. "I will lunch with you if you wish it. An old fool and two young ones—women like these combinations." He looked at his watch. "If the hour is half-past one we must go, in order not to keep your other guests waiting. Which way do we go?"

Mrs. Robley rose, and together they walked back past the beach in utter silence and took their way to the small clubhouse of which she had spoken, and there found Peters and Dicey waiting for them. Once seated at table, Haviland began to talk and soon was in his full delightful swing, a swing that always drew easy speech from others. Their table was near a big open window looking on the water, the light lunch well chosen, and the party the merriest in the room. The hovering waiter had a kind of pride in it; it added gayly to the whole scene, and the little place happened to be full.

Peters and Dicey early in the day recognized a master hand, but who at twenty-odd minds a man of forty-odd outshining them? And then Mrs. Robley had never been so gracious, she laughed as readily at their jokes and quips as at his. They sat long at table and smoked endless cigarettes, and at last Haviland shook hands with them at parting and said he would put them up at a famous athletic club in his city, and they urged him to come again to Sandbar; and so they parted.

Mrs. Robley, with eyes that shone brightly, walked slowly toward the pier, and they were alone again.

They sauntered along the beach and stopped and poked aside shells and stones as they went, talking a little idly of past things, and at last they reached the steps that led to the pier again, and standing at their foot the silence grew heavy and seemed to throb between them. She wondered if she wept whether he would look coldly or kindly upon her, and she wished that she was dead and it was all over—the pain in one's side, the dryness in one's throat, the struggle with stupid tears.

"We have plenty of time," remarked Haviland. "Let us go and sit on the steps at the end there, where one is out of the way. The boat isn't due yet, and you can't miss him, you know."

She caught her lip under her teeth. At least that absurd delusion of his should possess him to the end. He came to offer her beads and glass; well, he did not deserve to know that she stood with empty hands, only pride between her and her acceptance of them. What right had he to pretend to care? That bubble she would prick, however.

"How absurd you are!" she said and turned to him. Her color had risen in her cheeks and lent her youth again, and Haviland stood facing her and cursing fate within himself. "You behave as though you had any right to regret your idea that a man who really cares for me is coming to me—you ought to be glad there is a man who really cares."

She had drawn her slender height to its utmost, and looked straight into his eyes with the audacity he remembered.

"I ought to be glad that there is another man who really cares for you," he said. "By what canon of love ought I to be glad?"

"Don't!" said Mrs. Robley for the second time that day. "Don't! You have always been truthful and courageous—unpleasantly so. Be so to the end."

The man beside her took a step nearer. They had mounted to the pier and now leaned upon the parapet.

"I wonder what you mean," he said. "You can't have mistaken me, have you? Though what matter if you did, say you—but it does matter though. I love you too much to bear that, and since we are to part forever, take once the whole of what I have to give, hold it in your hands, own it, weigh it, and finding it wanting give it back to me."

Mrs. Robley turned to the parapet, and resting her arms upon it, shaded her eyes with her hand and looked toward the boat as it approached with a stately progress. She did not see it

and her heart had quite stopped beating and would never, it seemed, beat again.

"Will you not speak to me even?" said Haviland, with such a wound in his voice as made her heart tremble into place again. "Ah, the boat! I see!"

She turned toward him and laid her hand upon his arm as he was moving impetuously from her.

"Wait with me," she said. "I want you to. I ask it as a last favor—I will never ask another. Wait with me."

They had moved forward. He did not look at her, but he felt her hand on his arm, and his eyes devoured the figures that crowded the deck.

There was a rattle of chains, the gangplank was let down, and the passengers began to disembark. There were twenty of them perhaps, a number of people had gathered to meet them, and then they faded away; and standing beside Mrs. Robley he felt her tremble. He turned to her, a dark flush on his cheek.

"I don't understand," he said.

She drew away from him and looked down at her nervous fingers as they clasped her parasol.

"I came this morning to see if—my slippers had been sent from town by that early boat," she said. "I wonder if they have come by this one."

Haviland came a step nearer and took hold of the fluttering lace of her parasol.

"You came to meet—no one? There is no one?" he said.

She nodded, her color hot and steady, her eyes on the gravel at their feet.

"There is no one," she repeated.

"You mean," said Haviland, "you mean there is no one—no one else?"

Mrs. Robley turned to look at the boat. "It waits only half an hour," she remarked.

"And I," said Haviland, "have waited ten years."

MOON SONG

MAGNOLIA moon,
Blossoming out of the trees,
Blown by the breeze
Straight from the warm white heart of June—
Magnolia moon!
Leave thy mist meadows, lean unto my sweet;
Shower her casement deep with luminous petals fleet;
Breathe to her, shine to her, all my coward lips would say
Yet dare not utter as a lover may,
The times I fling me wordless at her feet—
Dumb, drowned in ecstasy, afraid to look, to touch, to sigh.
Tell her I love her—that I die
Because of her, magnolia moon!
Into this plea I pour myself with might;
Oh, serve me—serve me well this night,
Magnolia moon,
Blown from the passionate white heart of June!

ANGELA MORGAN.



By George Lee Burton

"WELL, do you believe in love at first sight?"

"Most assuredly, my dear."

"How confident! Your tone almost suggests experience."

"Why not?"

"*You?* Not truly, you model of conservatism?"

"Don't deride me, Betty."

"When did it happen?"

"Five years ago, when I was very young; it never happens except to the very young."

"And you've kept it from me all this time! Now I understand your never seeming to consider suitors seriously. Have you been really *engaged* for the last five years? Are you trying to surpass Mary Jocelyn's seven-year engagement? Who is he, Nell? Why don't you marry him?"

"Gently, Betty! You overwhelm me; but I am willing to tell you all."

"Dear heart, begin. Which one is he?"

"You would never guess. I was visiting Mrs. Shaw. It was my first long visit with her, and you know what a delightful hostess she is. I had all the enthusiasm of the lately emancipated schoolgirl, with eyes and ears keen for romance; each new man was a possibility, and fate might turn the corner any moment. Devotees galore seemed a certainty with Mr. and Mrs. Shaw, their social gifts and their beautiful home. Life was a dazzling sunrise. Don't you remember your first experiences?"

"Hush, Nell! You make me feel horribly old, in calling up lost enthusiasm."

"I had been there but a few days when Mr. Shaw took us out one evenning for a drive in his new car, ending with dinner at the Cross Country Riding Club. We had a lovely ride, and you know the views from the clubhouse verandas—the wide stretches of rolling grassy country and wooded hills, with the river giving the finishing touch."

"They're beautiful. I, too, have been there chaperoned by Mrs. Shaw."

"It was the first of June and a perfect afternoon for the country—everything blossomy and chirpy and springy green—and we were near one corner of the veranda waiting for dinner and watching the glorious afterglow of the sunset when a man came riding up the broad drive that meandered down the hill from the clubhouse. I heard the little metallic crush of his horse's hoofs upon the road, and transferred my gaze from the glowing sky to the horseman; then I knew at once he was my Prince."

"Charming! Tell me how he appeared."

"Tall and well-built, clean-cut and vigorous and—Oh, so altogether attractive!—with adorable strong eyes under tawny bushy eyebrows, and white teeth beneath a carefully trimmed mass of tangled yellowish-brown mustache. He sat his horse with that tireless erect ease which suggested much time in the saddle, and his gray suit and gray hat against the fresh green background of hedge and shrubbery gave the finishing touch. I presently became aware of Mrs. Shaw's ending some remark with: 'Don't you think so, Nell?' and realized I had been positively staring at the man, as he had checked his horse and gazed back straight into my eyes."

"Why, my dear, how striking he must have been!"

"He was, and I was younger then. I turned and found Mr. Shaw watching with a quizzical smile, so I blushed and laughed rather confusedly as I asked: 'Who is he?' Mr. and Mrs. Shaw exchanged glances, and then, 'One of the new men, a Mr. Hunt, I believe,' she replied, with a fine imitation of carelessness. 'Mr. Hunt?' I repeated. 'Trescott Hunt, the new vice-president of the Civic Electric Company,' Mr. Shaw supplemented. 'Isn't he attractive-looking?' I appealed in response. 'I don't care for him,' was the non-committal answer."

"What became of your object of interest, while you sat there discussing him?"

"It was really only a minute, but he had remained motionless on his horse, I observed as I looked around, just as if he had been waiting for me to glance in his direction once more. Mr. Shaw bowed to him casually, but Mrs. Shaw was so absorbed in the sunset glow that she did not turn again and at this point called my attention to the contrast between the red and the slate-colored; whereupon Mr. Hunt tipped his hat in acknowledgment of the bow and rode on to the side where a groom stood waiting for his horse. And, Betty, I did not hear him but I saw him give a long full sigh as he touched his horse and they moved on toward the groom."

"Why should he sigh?"

"Don't embarrass me, my dear, I am trying to tell you all, but I thought you had *some* imagination. Mrs. Shaw, I know, did not believe that all the beauty was in the sky, and my gown was a dream of simple freshness; while *any* girl, the very plainest, would look well if she saw love and happiness in such a shape riding up to claim her."

"Did he come rushing over to get you as soon as he had disposed of his horse?"

"Of course not; I did not meet him that evening. Neither of my chaperons arranged it, and it seems he had an engagement with another little party for dinner. As he swung himself lightly off his horse, I managed to shift my chair a trifle so as to see him out of the corner of my eye farthest from the sunset, and I noted the buoyant forcefulness of his movements as he turned to enter the clubhouse."

"So he passed off stage in elegant grace, and left you dreaming, I suppose."

"Not exactly; for he turned once more in our direction and did not see a jolly St. Bernard puppy, that had come capering up in joyful wriggles and jumps to greet him, until his feet and the dog had gotten hopelessly tangled. That instantly withdrew Mr. Hunt's attention from us, and stumbling with an awkward lurch he barely escaped a fall; but whether because it was so unexpected or because it made him ridiculous at that critical moment, he flared instantly and gave the puppy a brutal kick that sent it away rending the air with shrill sobbing howls—on account of a broken rib, we afterward learned."

"Oh, Nell, how could he?"

"Of course he was annoyed and did not consider what he was doing, certainly not what we would think of him, but I covered my face with my hands—I couldn't help it—and I heard Mr. Shaw grit his teeth."

"Exit Mr. Hunt, for that evening."

"Wrong again. Soon I found myself forgetting the last incident and dwelling upon his strong clean face, with its fascinated expression, and upon the vigorous grace of the tall figure in the gray suit, until we were joined by other friends; for many were strolling about in couples and threes, stopping from time to time to chat with the stationary groups, and later our party made a tour of the rooms."

"Did Mr. Hunt reappear?"

"We saw him at dinner. Mr. Shaw had had a table reserved for us at one side of the dining veranda, and said to me as we reached it: 'You sit here against the wall, so that you can have the full effect.' It was all delightfully arranged. There were great boughs of trees in tall floor vases everywhere;

large silky peonies and old-fashioned annual roses on the tables lent a charm and subtle fragrance, all their own; while the fluffy flower-like pink shades on the candles prevented all glare and gave an added touch of soft beauty. The open sides of the veranda permitted a glimpse of night settling down over the valley, with stars lighting up overhead and half of a moon, and a distant trolley-car trailing brilliancy through the shadows of trees and hills."

"An ideal setting for romance."

"Yes, it helped to make it, I am sure, although I did not realize it at the time —simply felt the spell of it all and of the glimpse of the Prince. Soon there appeared at the table next to ours a girl with an important-looking matron, who was evidently her mother, and Mr. Hunt."

"Had he planned that table?"

"Evidently. The waiter seemed to understand and deftly helped in seating the party—the girl with her back to me, the matron at one side, and Trescott himself directly facing me, not fifteen feet away across the two tables and the intervening space."

"Did he have the grace to keep his eyes from roving?"

"Alas, no; for he seemed to constantly shift his gaze, even when talking, from the girl opposite him to our table by the wall, as if he were comparing us."

"I hope you were severely on your guard, my dear. What did you do?"

"Gazed back appreciatively at times, I know, although I tried not to do so; and I blushed most of the time so that it was noticeable even in the dim pink light."

"I'm astonished at you, Nell! What else?"

"In that fairyland of green boughs and spring flowers, lit by the soft lights of the candles in the fluffy shades, with the poetry of the summer night just outside, do you wonder that I forgot we were supposed to dine, when I found myself opposite that gray-clad perfect figure and slightly ruddy face, with those fearless adoring eyes ever seeking and claiming me?"

"What *were* your chaperons doing?"

"Becoming restless and helplessly uneasy. Finally Mrs. Shaw said in her lowest carrying tones: 'Addison, this will never do. Nell must change her seat.' 'She can't now,' he replied in his well-trained voice and manner, adapted to private conversation in public places. 'Every one here would see why.' 'It is outrageously impudent in him,' she murmured indignantly, although her remark must have seemed a smiling commonplace to those across the adjacent tables. 'Yes, but Nell doesn't seem to object, and perhaps he can not help it. I see you resent his making it difficult to chaperon your youthful protégée.' To which she deigned no reply, but turning away gave a frigid acknowledgment of the important-looking matron's bow which she could not escape. 'Although you can't change your seat, don't blush like that,' Mr. Shaw admonished me in an undertone with assumed severity. 'It is a mistake to be too beautiful.' While Mrs. Shaw assented and besought me to talk to her, even if I had to recite sonnets."

"Did you stop blushing?"

"How could I? I was very young, and I had realized from the first look that he was the appointed one. His open admiration was flattering and reassuring, though of course I did not wish to be conspicuous."

"Who was the other girl?"

"I inquired. 'Miss Eustace,' Mrs. Shaw replied. 'Their engagement has just been whispered to a few intimate friends, I understand, though not yet formally announced.'"

"Were you jealous, Nell?"

"Perhaps for a moment, until he gazed at us again. 'He doesn't look to me as if he were engaged to her,' I vouchsafed. 'He doesn't look *at* you as if he were engaged to her, I confess,' Mr. Shaw responded. The girl evidently recognized that the light in his eyes which had been directed at her now passed on to another, and she seemed slightly conscious, I fancied, though she showed fine training, and was properly interested and vivacious.

As we rose, however, she casually surveyed our part of the veranda for a glimpse of me, while I as casually glanced past her to take an inventory of her charms."

"What style, Nell?"

"We were not unlike in general features and coloring. She was evidently several years older and had a slightly strained expression, but whether it was habitual or lined in by the situation I could not determine; she had the charm and grace of experienced manners. He noted her surveying me and I heard him say to her: 'Isn't she inspiring? That's my ideal of an attractive face.'"

"To his fiancée? Atrocious!"

"Yes, and even then I felt it was a deliberate attempt to provoke her, although spoken so lightly that it could not be seriously resented. I condemned it as unnecessary and unkind, yet I thought he did not know I heard, and I felt almost unconsciously kindly toward him on account of the compliment and his personality."

"That closed the evening?"

"Not quite. Later, as we were passing out to our waiting car, I was at Mrs. Shaw's left, while Mr. Shaw was at her other side. Suddenly I became aware that in the slowly moving crowd Mr. Hunt was talking to an unknown man slightly behind and at my left; his voice came low but distinct, in full rich tones, and I could not avoid hearing. 'There's the girl for me, that beauty with the Shaws,' he said. 'Who is she?' the man asked guardedly. 'Miss Hastings; she may have me if she wishes. I wonder whether she would be satisfied as Mrs. Trescott Hunt.' 'Have you met her?' 'Not yet, for I'm afraid I should propose at once, and I have another affair to get out of first; but I'm already re-ticketed *'Hers.'* ' I had turned at the first sound of his voice and had found him looking straight at me, boldly, yet deferentially beseeching. I did not look again, but knew he was watching the color creep from my neck up my cheek to my temple, and that he had planned this and purposely pitched his voice so it would carry to me but not to my chaperon."

"I suppose you immediately slipped in between Mr. and Mrs. Shaw and thus showed your disapproval."

"No, Betty, I did not wish to make a scene, and I confess I felt a thrill. Had I any doubt before, I knew then we were destined for each other."

"How lovely! I wish I could see my only destined!"

"As soon as we were outside, a little apart from the others, Mrs. Shaw did not attempt longer to restrain herself; but turning with disfavor toward her spouse remarked, either forgetting or ignoring my presence: 'Addison, you should have known better than to have brought us out here without another man.' 'I did ask Ellis Roberts and he was coming,' was the defense, 'but at the last moment he phoned he could not get off; surely Nell can endure us by ourselves for one evening.' 'Don't be dense, please,' Mrs. Shaw replied."

"What did he say to that?"

"'Oh, well, Hortense, don't worry over Nell. I think the young lady enjoyed the evening, didn't she?' he questioned, looking toward me. 'Intensely,' I replied. But Mrs. Shaw did not smile, and silence took possession of our party for the first half of the homeward trip."

"After all, your conduct wasn't reprehensible."

"No, unless sudden affection is a crime."

"One can not keep from falling in love, I suppose."

"That was my belief at the time, though I made no effort to prevent it."

"I fancy not—at that age."

"The night was perfect, the light from the moon and stars being sufficient to show the country in an appealing way, without any glare. We took the return leisurely, for it was still early, and allowed car after car to pass us as we glided along in silence over the level road. At a rather picturesque point, where a little cliff rose on one side and on the other only a footpath separated the driveway from the steep embankment that ended in a ditch, we noticed the reeling figure of a drunken

tramp stumbling along the path. 'That fellow had better look out or he will tumble down,' Mr. Shaw remarked, when we were a hundred yards or so behind him."

"Poor fellow! Was no one with him?"

"No, he was staggering along alone, a blotch upon the idyllic night. Presently another car shot by and cut in ahead of us, and we heard the driver say to the girl sitting beside him: 'Watch me fix him!' 'That is Trescott Hunt, with your rival, in front,' Mr. Shaw remarked banteringly; but Mrs. Shaw maintained her disapproving silence."

"Did Mr. Hunt refer to passing and cutting in ahead of you?"

"I wondered, and was about to ask, when we saw his car slacken a little and then deliberately turn to the edge of the road as it approached the tramp. 'Look at that! The brute!' Mr. Shaw exclaimed aloud, as the machine ahead, evidently under perfect control, left the road and edged over into the footpath just behind the reeling man; then with perfectly gauged speed and distance pushed past, crowding him off sprawling down the bank. A hard laugh, a man's laugh, floated back to us from the car, and we could see him turning to watch the fallen one roll over and over into the mud of the bed of the ditch."

"It could not have been done purposely!"

"It could not have happened in any other way, Betty. The laugh ahead was broken by protests of disapproval from the girl and her mother. They continued to move slowly for a few seconds until the overturned man began to gather himself together, apparently unhurt except for bruises; then the car in front sped swiftly away and left us alone at that part of the road."

"What did Mr. Shaw do?"

"Began to express his opinion of the occurrence, but Mrs. Shaw remonstrated gently: 'Addison, have the goodness to desist.' And I fancied I could see, even in that light, the kindness in her eyes as she looked at me while speaking. 'Suppose you go to the man and see if he needs any attention.'"

"Was the tramp injured?"

"Not seriously. Mr. Shaw stopped the machine, and we watched the man get up with difficulty out of the mud and stand rather wobbly upon the bank; then seat himself with exaggerated care. Finally, at Mrs. Shaw's second suggestion, her husband called and then went down to see the man's condition, but presently returned, saying: 'He is not much hurt; I think he prefers to remain where he is and sober up.'"

"What an ending to your evening of romance!"

"It was not pleasant, but I insisted that Mr. Hunt must have lost control of his car; however, neither my host nor my hostess would discuss the matter further. I spent the remaining silence of our ride in dwelling upon the earlier part of the evening, and upon his perfect figure and clean handsome face, with the strong eyes full of admiration; until I dreamed that night of a faultless Prince, with a face like his, who came riding up to the castle on the heights to claim me."

"You forgot all but the attractive?"

"Why not? Don't we usually in the case of our friends? And Betty, there was a magnetic appeal about him which I felt even then, although not fully analyzing it. The next evening Mr. Shaw remarked: 'Trescott certainly gave Colonel Eustace a jolt to-day; threw him so absolutely in a stock deal that the old man cursed him roundly, and refused afterward to speak to him.' 'That must have been embarrassing, under the circumstances,' Mrs. Shaw responded. 'It didn't seem to worry Hunt at all,' was the reply. 'He appeared so satisfied that I believe he actually had planned to anger the old man.' 'The idea!' his wife exclaimed; then dropped the subject and began to talk of something else."

"When did you see him next, Nell?"

"At the polo game, two days later, but I did not meet him that day. He was so wholesomely handsome, with his straightforward eyes carefully planning each stroke and his sinewy vigorous

body responding like a splendid machine, while his pony seemed to delight in his master's intelligence and riding. Mr. Hunt sat his pony easily, even in the most trying reaches and turns, and he was a winner, too. I do love a winner! I forgot everything but how fine he was."

"Did he notice you at all?"

"*Did* he? He looked to me for approval so regularly after each good play that I became embarrassed, and had to apparently ignore his playing. We did not see the other girl. 'I wonder why Miss Eustace is not here?' Mrs. Shaw remarked to a gossipy friend. 'There has been some disagreement, I understand,' was the answer. 'She resented his lack of consideration, it seems, but I haven't heard the particulars—as yet. Do you know anything about it?' But my chaperon exclaimed just then: 'Oh, look at that play! How fine!' and the other topic sank out of thought."

"Did you see much of him after that?"

"At the end of the next week I had not met him, but had seen him driving past the house and at other places. He had been mentioned only casually, but I had thought of him more than of all the others I had seen, and I knew he would come to me some day."

"'Some day, some day!'"

"Don't mock, Betty, even in song, or I shall reveal my heart no more."

"Do proceed; behold me reformed and grave."

"I was sitting alone in the library late one afternoon, by the open window that looks out over a bit of garden. The door into the hall was open, and I noticed, as I glanced up from my book, Mr. and Mrs. Shaw stroll past and out upon the porch, finally taking seats just outside my window. Presently Mrs. Shaw said: 'I heard to-day that Miss Eustace had broken her engagement with Trescott Hunt.' 'I'm not surprised,' was the answer."

"You didn't listen, did you?"

"I tried not to, but could not help it, Betty—especially after their first words; they were not six feet away. 'I heard,' Mrs. Shaw continued, 'that in addition to all the other things he has done he actually laughed at the girl in her presence and before others for seeming to care so much for him; that he treated her so shabbily her self-respect demanded that she break the engagement.' 'Insufferable!' was the terse reply."

"And it was, you know."

"Oh, Betty, one can hear anything. Don't be hasty in your judgments. 'He seems to admire our little guest very much,' Mrs. Shaw continued, 'though he has not met her yet.' 'I don't approve of him,' Mr. Shaw responded firmly. 'Neither do I,' his wife replied. 'But let's help her, Addison; remember we were once young ourselves.' 'Very well, if you think it wise; I trust your judgment for happiness.' Dinner was then announced, but from that moment I dearly loved them both. Afterward I decided Mrs. Shaw must have known I was there, and that she had deliberately planned for me to hear all."

"I wonder."

"I am sure of it. Just six days after that—for I had counted each day and considered whether that would be the one on which they would have him meet me, Mr. Shaw remarked at the breakfast table: 'By the way, Hortense, won't you and Nell dine with me at the Cross Country Club this evening? Mr. Hunt has asked to meet you, Nell, and I thought we might arrange a little dinner out there. You seemed to enjoy that first one,' he ended, smiling."

"What did you say?"

"Just as Mrs. Shaw decides,' I answered, looking toward her and blushing a little. 'Yes, Addison, thank you. Let's go out early, for it promises to be a lovely day.' So it was decided, and until we went I thought of him constantly."

"Didn't you criticise at all?"

"Perhaps, in a way. I knew I ought not to like him and would think of his brutality to that girl and to others; but then I would think how tall and well-built he was, of his strong eyes and clean-cut face and mouth, of his seemingly tireless vigor, and, oh, his altogether attractiveness, when you forgot

that other side of him. So I proceeded to forget that other side habitually, and dwelt upon the manner in which he looked at me. I knew he would never treat me cruelly, and that I could eliminate all the undesirables in him! I *knew* I could, for I was very young, my dear."

"Haven't you, yet, Nell? Don't tell me that you have not."

"Alas, no; I fear I have not changed him at all. Mrs. Shaw and I went out together, the chauffeur driving, while Mr. Shaw came in his other car direct from the office. We were early enough for a stroll along the shaded path on top of the ridge, where the views are finest at sunset, then returned leisurely to the clubhouse veranda where I had first seen him some three weeks before."

"That is an ideal setting for first impressions, Nell."

"Isn't it? Late in the afternoon, in June. There were stretched out below those wide reaches of rolling grassy country and wooded hills, with the river in the distance giving the finishing touch. We were at that same corner watching the afterglow of the sunset, when I caught my breath, for I saw a horseman coming up the hill—the gray-clad figure sitting his horse with that tireless grace I had learned to admire so much. I confess my heart beat more quickly as I watched the clean-cut face and strong eyes, with the close-cropped tawny mustache matching the bushy brows. Swinging lightly off his horse, he left the animal with a waiting groom and started toward us; and as his eyes full of that happy admiring light looked into mine a moment, I thought to myself: 'At last!'"

"Ah, Nell, you make me envy you!"

"Mr. Shaw rose to meet him with the dignified cordiality of the host, and said: 'Good evening. Glad you could come so early. You do not need to be presented to my wife'—she smiled graciously—'but I think you have never met our guest, Miss Hastings.'"

"Did he propose at once?"

"Don't be foolish, dear. 'Good evening, Mr. Hunt,' was my commonplace greeting, while he merely said: 'This is the pleasure for which I've been hoping.' But his look—Oh, Betty! And he did hold my hand just a second too long, so that I had to draw it gently away."

"Yes, gently, I'll warrant."

"Betty, you are horrid! Don't *you* say things; for Mr. Shaw remarked afterward that I went so pink and white, as I fluttered my eyelids and looked so deliciously coy, that he did not see how the man could let my hand go at all."

"I wonder that he did. And then?"

"Mrs. Shaw came to the rescue and remarked: 'We have just been admiring the view; we never tire of it, do you?' 'I haven't grown tired of it yet,' was the answer in those full rich tones that carried me back to that first evening; and I, dreamily happy, gazed off down the winding road—then sat up straight with a shock."

"What, Nell?"

"There I saw another horseman approaching, the splendid gray-clad figure sitting his horse with that same dashing ease. As he came closer I watched in astonishment his clean-cut face, with its close-cropped tawny mustache and eyebrows to match, and the vigorous frame that swung off his horse with the grace I had learned to love. A groom took the horse, and when the horseman had tipped his hat to my host and my hostess, who bowed in response, and had gazed for a moment at me with strong admiring eyes, I looked at Mr. Hunt at my side and at Mr. Hunt approaching, and cried: 'Am I dreaming?'"

"Why, Nell, had you lost your head as well as your heart?"

"I began to think so, when Mr. Shaw remarked as he greeted him cordially: 'I think you do not need to be presented to my wife'—she again smiled graciously—'but I believe you have never met our guest, Miss Hastings.' I don't know what I said, but I heard him murmur in those full rich tones, as he clasped my hand: 'This is the pleasure for which I've been hoping.' And his look—he made me look at him. Oh, Betty! I felt the same thrill again, and

became aware that he was holding my hand a second too long. I gently, mechanically, withdrew it, beginning to feel it was becoming a habit; then I gazed in astonishment at the duplicates."

"Was he twins, Nell?"

"I was too utterly dazed to determine; for I looked from one to the other and saw each perfectly attractive, with the same clean-cut faces and well-groomed gray-clad figures of commanding graceful vigor, while the adoring light burned in each pair of strong eyes under their respective tawny brows. Then I heard Mrs. Shaw's cool pleasing voice again. 'We have been admiring the view; we never tire of it, do you?' And there came back the answer from the second arrival: 'I haven't grown tired of it yet.' "

"Wake up, Nell; you are repeating yourself."

"No, I'm repeating them. I hope you understand, Betty, that I am perfectly collected now after all these years. I looked again into each adorable face and into each pair of adoring eyes, and felt a double thrill, when a little cry from Mrs. Shaw caused me to glance around; whereupon I noted another horseman riding up, holding his splendid gray-clad figure with that long-admired ease. As I watched his swinging grace in dismounting, his tawny mustache and eyebrows, and the look of devoted light in his strong eyes as they met mine, I turned to his doubles at my side and said: 'Are you really real, or am I simply imagining you?' 'I am afraid you are simply imagining me,' was the duet answer. 'Let me shake hands and see,' I responded.

"Did they?"

"With alacrity. Each clasped a hand in both of his. They were certainly real handclasps, Betty; my hands seem to ache now at the memory of those grasps."

"Had your eyes become suddenly crossed, my dear?"

"No, Betty, I am sure not; for their glances showed no indication of anything wrong in my eyes; but my brain whirled, as I stupidly stared at the third adoring one while Mr. Shaw presented him, and I heard him murmur: 'This is the pleasure for which I've been hoping!'

"Those very same words; and he also gave me the too-long grasp of the hand, so that I had to again withdraw it. For some seconds I searched his face, but although the adoring light from his eyes seemed genuine, I felt no responsive thrill. It was as if my emotion had been exhausted, and I stood staring until Mrs. Shaw had actually said again: 'We have just been admiring the view.' Then I burst into a laugh and exclaimed to the last comer. 'Don't tell her you haven't tired of it yet, Mr. Hunt, I beg of you, even if you do exist in multiple replica.' "

"Did he think you crazy?"

"No, he seemed to understand, for all laughed as if they had been waiting for an opportunity. Mr. Shaw interrupted by saying: 'There is Trescott Hunt coming up the hill.' 'Again!' I exclaimed. And we turned to watch the splendid gray-clad figure sitting with that alert ease. As he drew nearer I noted the tawny mustache and brows, and saw the admiring expectant look he threw in my direction, but I felt no answering thrill."

"Why, Nell, was it all a dream?"

"I was never more awake in my life —nor more mystified. I turned to look once more at the row of three by my side, but although each pair of eyes threw its respective adoring look as before, and their clean-cut faces and splendid athletic figures in their perfectly fitting gray suits should have had the same attraction, I felt no longer a thrill, only disaffected weariness and desire to get away from them all."

"Surfeited with adoration?"

"It was uncanny, preposterous, and 'I'm going home!' I cried. 'Take me home, please, Mrs. Shaw.' 'Wait, my dear, Mr. Hunt is coming now,' she said gently. 'No, no; I *will* not meet him; he has come too often already. Take me home now, won't you, Mrs. Shaw?' And she did."

"Without meeting the last one?"

"Yes. Mr. Shaw advanced to head

him off, and he had already stopped in astonishment at seeing three of himself already standing there with us. 'Which of you is the real one?' I queried of the three, now laughingly indifferent to them all. 'And how did there happen to be so many cousins of you alike?'"

"What did they say?"

"For answer they each took out a card, drew up their splendid athletic figures in military stiffness, and after breaking at the waist in a profound bow they stood erect, with left hands at side and right holding over their respective hearts cards on which I read in large letters: 'Metropolitan Theatrical Agency.'"

"Why, Nell, the frauds!"

"I laughed aloud, a trifle hysterically, perhaps, and they smiled guardedly, for Mrs. Shaw was only semi-mirthful as she said: 'Come, Nell, we will pass around this way and take our car from the other side of the building, if you positively will not meet Mr. Hunt.' As I started off behind her, the last arrived of the three handed me a newspaper clipping and said respectfully, but with the admiring light still in his eyes: 'If I could only have come first!' While I heard Number One say in a changed voice to Number Two, sighing as he turned away: 'I wisht now I was the real thing in swells, don't you, Batts?' To which came back the answer: 'Sure, Mike!' as the three moved their handsome gray-clad frames toward their waiting horses."

"How dared they come, Nell?"

"It was all Mr. Shaw's doing. I talked it over with Mrs. Shaw on our way home, while Mr. Shaw stayed to make peace with the original Mr. Hunt. The clipping read:

"'WANTED—SUPERS: Young men between six feet and six feet one inch, with strong eyes, clean-cut faces, and well-built athletic figures. Apply between one p. m. and five p. m. at Metropolitan Theatrical Agency.'

"Mr. Shaw had arranged it, all unknown to the real Mr. Hunt."

"An expensive jest, was it not?"

"Mr. Shaw seemed perfectly satisfied. I overheard him say to his wife one day: 'I haven't enjoyed anything more for a year. After all, most love at first sight is merely physical attraction.' And she replied: 'I am glad there is something nobler, dear.' But although my love did not last, I have always admired the splendid acting of those supers—they looked the adoringly devoted so marvelously well."

"In this case, that need not indicate genius."

"Thank you, Betty—you purveyor of delightful insincerities."

"And all your unspoken love——"

"Flickered out as suddenly as it had flamed."

"But, Nell, afterward, when you met him——"

"I never did meet him."

"You don't mean to say you never *met* him? Oh, Nell, you fell in love and out again with a man you never even *met!*"



THE BEGGAR MINSTREL

A HARP and a song and a tender heart
Were all that the singer had;
So he played on his harp to the weary,
And he sang when the days were dreary,
And the tired old world was glad.

ARTHUR WALLACE PEACH.

The Drum



By Owen Oliver

STEEL of the R. A. M. C., reputed the cleverest doctor in the presidency, leaned over the balcony of the palace and smoked a cigar. There was a dance below, and his fingers tapped time to the music, but he did not know that he heard it; and his mind put more into his eyes than his eyes put into his mind.

There was little indeed for his eyes to see. The night swallowed up everything but a huge Hindoo temple, that stood like a stouter shadow among the shades, and the light that streamed out from the ballroom met the great darkness, and failed. The next day he was leading out a handful of doctors and nurses to fight the hosts of sickness and ignorance and superstition; and he seemed to read its fate in the failure of the light.

"It is hopeless," he told himself; and he had never told himself that before, during his whole career.

He was a man of many theories, and among them was this; that the man who expects failure fails. That was no reason why the man should not venture himself; but it was a reason why he should not lead out others. Steel had almost decided that it was his duty to denounce the expedition as hopeless and let himself be stamped with the coward's brand when a voice floated up from the terrace below. He recognized the voice as that of Miss Anstruther, the beautiful heiress, though he had seen her for the first time that night. His memory always registered voices, and there was a very attractive ring in hers.

"Doctor Steel may be a crank," she said. "I dare say he is. You may call him what you please. *I* call him a man! You soldiers go off on your little expeditions against a few savages, with your rifles and your machine guns and the band playing you mad, and feel like heroes. He's setting out with a bag of pills to fight death—horrible creepy death—and he hasn't even a drum. I'd like to beat the drum for him!"

Surgeon-Major Steel drew himself up, like a soldier ordered to attention.

"The drum!" he said in a sharp whisper. "The drum!" His eyes shone, if there had been any one to see them in the dark.

He wandered from the balcony into the empty billiard room, and played a few strokes, dribbling the three balls round the cushion with a skilful hand, as an automaton might play, without a mind. Then he threw down the cue and smiled again.

"The drum!" he repeated softly.

He went down to the ballroom, and watched till he saw Miss Anstruther alone for a moment. Then he walked up to her.

"I need the drum," he said abruptly. "Will you play it for me? I will get some one to introduce us, if that matters."

Miss Anstruther looked up at him, young and bonny and flushed, and smiling a smile that was half startled and half amused and wholly friendly.

"When you find a wounded man," she said, "you don't wait to be intro-

duced. If you want a drummer—— But I think it is a doctor that you need."

They walked out on the terrace together, and found seats in a quiet corner.

"And you are wounded," she said, going on from where they left off five minutes before.

"Who isn't before he comes to five and thirty?"

"I haven't even come to five and twenty, you see."

"I see *that!*" He smiled with frank approval of her youth and beauty. "Still you are old enough for a drummer boy."

"And young for a doctor? Tell me."

"Yes. I was pondering over my fight with 'creepy death'; wondering if I should go into it or come out of it, thinking that it wouldn't matter much if I didn't and that I wasn't fit to lead a desperate expedition when I felt like that. I had almost made up my mind to tell the authorities that it was hopeless, and then—Rum-tum-tum! A brave little drum struck up and heartened me. I wondered if you could hearten me for a bigger fight, Doctor Drummer Boy—the fight with life. So I came to try; and—I am always candid—to gain the cheerful memory of half an hour with a particularly nice girl. I am an old fogy, so I can say things like that to you bright young creatures."

"If they consider you a fogy," she answered, with a sideways turn of her head and a smile, "I don't, you see."

"Rum-tum-tum!" Steel laughed. "You are a most encouraging drummer."

"I must cure the wounded man, I think, before I encourage him to fight. The wound is in the *heart,* I suppose?"

"It was; but that's only a tiny scar these many years. It's dispersed in the system, if you understand, doctor. She doesn't matter now, or any other woman in particular. That's the trouble; that things don't matter." He sighed.

"Some do," she said gently. "Oh, yes! Some do. There is your work, big work, noble work, *hard* work. *That* matters!"

"Rum-tum-tum! Go on, drummer!"

"And your professional reputation. Even I know——"

"A reputation to lose. That doesn't sound the drum."

"You don't mean to lose it. *That* does!"

He nodded and smiled grimly.

"Go on!" he said.

"And the friends who believe in you, who will look on at the fight! May I be one?"

"You are more than a drummer!" Steel cried. "You are a whole band! Miss Anstruther, you are a very good girl. If I shouldn't come back—— You needn't shiver; it's a good end to die fighting to the sound of the drum. If I should will you remember that there was a man once who expected great things of himself, and he expected great things of you? I should be glad to think that such a memory might sound the call to you if ever you needed it. My dear girl, we all do."

"I should be glad to remember that," she said steadily, "but I shall be more glad to see you come back. You will go, and you will do your duty, by the standard that *you* set; and that is much more than duty, and—— May I play once more? God bless you!"

Steel bowed his head for a few moments.

"God bless *you,*" he said reverently. "I have not taken help from others often, but you have helped me greatly. You dear girl!"

"Do you really forget her?" Miss Anstruther asked, after an interval.

"I couldn't tell you the color of her eyes," said Steel, "or the sound of her voice. I remember voices better. I shall remember—the sound of the drum."

"It will play," she promised, "when you come home."

It played again before he went. She was at the railway station when the medical-relief expedition set out upon the following afternoon. Steel left the crowd of friends and went to meet her. People raised their eyebrows and smiled, as they walked up and down the

platform together; for Steel was reckoned a woman-hater.

"This is a great and unexpected pleasure," he said. "I shall never forget the drum, or the drummer boy."

"Then perhaps you will think this reminder unnecessary," she said, "but will you take it, please?"

She gave him a little silver drum. It lies now in an old desk, with his other treasures; some little notes and post cards that she sent to him while he was away on the expedition. These—and some others—shall tell the rest of the story.

I.

Rum-tum-tum!

You will not heed the drum when the fight grows hotter, or need it. So I must play now. Rum-tum-tum!

Don't let it make your courage foolhardy, please. The good general does not expose himself.

Best wishes from

THE DRUMMER.

II.

Rum-tum-tum!

I searched for two mornings to find a drummer boy on a picture post card. Good luck! A. A.

III.

I hear that things are so much worse than you expected. Sister Morris has come back looking like a ghost. She says that you do the work of six people, and that your cheerfulness is wonderful. I wanted to volunteer, but the surgeon-general says that amateurs are useless. "Not quite," I told him. "They can encourage those who do the work." "Well," he said, "if you can encourage Steel do it. It all turns on him."

Shall I beat the drum for you? No. You do not need it now the fight is thick. I will not insult you by playing, but I do so wish you success.

Every one has such confidence in you, and no one more than

Yours very sincerely,

ANGELA ANSTRUTHER.

P. S. Be careful of yourself.

IV.

Oh! It is a muffled drum! I did not know your second, or Nurse Brown; but I know how you must feel, and I know how hard the fight must be for you now. I have volunteered again, but they will not have me. Will you understand that you played the drum for me? I shall not be so useless and pleasure-loving as I was.

I do so sympathize. God help you and bless you! I pray that every day.

Yours in all sympathy,

ANGELA ANSTRUTHER.

V.

DEAR MISS ANSTRUTHER:

Steel is afraid to write to you because the paper might carry infection, and he won't let you run the least risk. When I left he asked me to send you a line as soon as I was out of quarantine. He wants me to say that your kind little notes encourage him greatly, and that he has a fetich which protects him from all danger. It is a little silver drum.

When I left he was as well as a man who overworks desperately can be. He has the place in wonderful order—he would, you know—but they need three times the staff and six times the accommodation. The stupidity and superstition of the natives are incredible. The higher castes are the worst, and have a bad influence over the others. Steel has to send a party of soldiers and take some of them from their vile dens and put them in the hospital by main force. Any other man would have been poisoned, but they have an extraordinary reverence for him. He is a wonderful chap, and the best man I know.

Yours very truly,

R. MORTON.

VI.

I have heard from Captain Morton. Thank you. I am so glad that I help. The drum is still beating, of course; and since you like to hear from me I am going to write you a long letter, and tell you all the news. . . . There!

That finishes the local gossip. I hope it hasn't worried you. It must seem so small to you, who are doing such big things. But will you believe that I have written this little chronicle out of a large desire to cheer you?

You must be careful of yourself because I am practicing a tremendous tattoo to play when the hero returns.

With kind regards,

THE DRUMMER.

P. S. I am not at all afraid of infection, and the surgeon-general says that, with proper precautions, the risk of a letter carrying it is very small.

VII.

Rum-tum-tum-*tum!* Ever so many of them.

General Macnamara tells me that you are getting it under. I am so glad. How worn out you must be.

Now for the budget of news. . . . That's all, I think.

The surgeon-general says that you have a theory that you are case-hardened by now, but he has a theory that people who are run down by hard work have weak places in their "case" for the hardy little germs who still remain to carry on guerrilla warfare. He also says that you won't listen to his theories, but you might listen to mine. *He* would, he says. The nice old man!

Well, I've lots of theories. Here's one: The drummer boy is entitled to play his drum. The hero has no right to get killed after the fight is over, and rob the poor boy of his great chance of drumming.

Here's another theory: Letters can be so disinfected as to be quite harmless; and the poor youth who drums on the outskirts ought to be told how the battle is going.

I am sure you never expected theories from THE DRUMMER BOY.

VIII.

I had your message from Major Thornton; but when I cross-examined him he gave a very poor account of your health. You *must* be careful of yourself. Think how necessary you are to others. It is doubly your duty to guard yourself. I think trebly; once for yourself, once for your patients, and once for your friends.

If you don't send me a disinfected letter I shall believe that you are ill, and that will worry me.

Yours with best wishes,

ANGELA ANSTRUTHER.

IX.

DEAR DRUMMER:

I am a bit fagged, but very well. Your letters have been medicine to me all through, and the drum has been a charm; and the drummer is the greatest of all charmers, if an old fogy may say what he very certainly feels.

Things are much better now. At first . . . There's our history. I am certain that I have never written so long a letter before!

I have disinfected this, and have arranged for it to be doubly redisinfected before it reaches you. The risk may be small, but a small risk counts when it falls upon a valuable person.

How you have helped me! You very kind and helpful girl! God bless you!

Yours truly—and this is not a formal subscription, F. STEEL.

X.

Rum-tum-tum!

They say it's practically all over; and I hear that you are coming back very quickly, and are to be tempted out of the army medical department with something much bigger. Conquering hero! Rum-tum-tum!

You are *not* a fogy. I am going to drum that into you when you return.

XI.

Your last letter was disinfected to illegibility. I made out "quite well" and "fogy." I have struck out fogy in red ink!

XII.

DEAR DRUMMER:

The fight is won, and I am set free from my labors to rest and get disin-

fected. I have hoped for this time and feared it. You say that you will play the drum on my return. Angela, I mustn't come. I love you.

I always have from the night that I talked to you; but I was an old fogy, I thought, and you would never guess; and an old fogy could love a bright young thing without wearing his heart upon his arm. My dear, I don't feel an old fogy when I think of you. I don't feel—but perhaps that is because I am a bit war-worn just now—that I could dare or bear to love you near. You are such a kind little friend, and you will not laugh at my presumption. So I think it is best to let you know the truth.

I recognize—always have recognized—that I am quite out of the question. You know that very well; would know it even if I came and took advantage of an undeserved admiration for work, that has been nothing very great after all, to make you attempt to deceive yourself, even if you could do so. For all I know you may be engaged to some good fellow, more in your own sphere of youth and riches. I hope he is a very good fellow, if it is so; or that he will be such when he comes along.

You must not worry your kind little heart about me. To have loved you—but it will always be the present tense—will not be a wound but a benediction. I must do without you, but I shall live my life like a man. While there is a fight to fight I shall fight it. You have beaten the drum!

God bless you, dear girl! I shall take a furlough in England; and when I come back, then I shall be brave enough to be friends near. I look upon your friendship as a gain to my life, and worth the price that I must pay.

Yours with deep regard,

F. STEEL.

XIII.

DEAR FRIEND:

Perhaps you can live your life like a man without me; but I cannot live my life like a woman if the man whom I love does not come to me. Please come!

Yours,

THE DRUMMER.

XIV.

LITTLE DRUMMER:

Dear little drummer! You have drummed heart into me till my heart beats like a drum. Oh! I will come! Three days more of quarantine. I never knew before the length of twenty-four hours. I keep reckoning it up. It is now two days and twenty-three hours, and I reckon to sleep most of the odd hours! I try to persuade myself that this reduces it to two days net. I never thought to be so crazy over a little girl; but I never thought that such a little girl was or could be. Wonderful little drummer!

I have formed a new theory of life. It is a battle, and love plays the drum! The drummer is an angel with the name of Angela!

Your lover—proud subscription!

FRANK STEEL.

XV.

DEAR FRANK:

I am coming up to the junction to meet you to-morrow. The general proposed it. I was always wishing that some one would!

It was when he asked me if I would like to be on the committee of reception, and I laughed and said: "I am the whole committee, general. I am going to marry him!"

He laughed a great deal at that, and then he said: "Well, I'm not going to have our committee cut out at the reception. The other committee had better go and meet him, and share the honors." So, you see, I shall *have* to come.

I shall feel very shy, I think. I don't mean shy of *you*. I think I ought to be, but I am not. I want you too much. Shy of the reception, I mean. But I shall like to share it with you, because—because the same drum is going to play for both of us. Life's *big* drum!

YOUR ANGELA.



WHEN she came aboard we didn't have the least suspicion that she was to become one of our mascots, for Heaven knows we had enough of them on the *Albania* as it was, there being no less than forty cats, and every man from the captain to the deck steward being the possessor of a canary or two for his own special amusement. It was in New York—you know the place where we land, down there at Pier Fifty-two—and the ship was lying alongside with the smoke curling low across the black border of her funnel as if impatient to poke out through the Narrows. The first and second-class gangways were being stowed and the third was just being eased up from the pier when there was a rush and a howl and a whoop—you know the kind—and here came the agent with two passengers.

They were for the steerage and I had to examine them as they came on, that being a part of the duties of a ship's surgeon. To tell the truth I wasn't good-humored, nor did I act the part. We physicians on the big liners have to wear a perpetual grin and act pleasant and polite when we often feel like —well, I won't say what. So I suppose I glared at them as they advanced. A woman was in the lead, and she was one of the kind that impresses you that they are glad to go home from a foreign country after the ground has been swept from their feet, their illusions destroyed, or perhaps other things—like the losses of husbands or sons—have made the land they've been exiled in seem barren and desolate. This woman was, I think, of Italy, but above the *contadina* class and spoke English with a soft broken accent and intonation that made me feel a little more kindly toward her—not because I'm a psychologist but because I surmised I was rubbing elbows with some one who was more familiar with sobs than smiles.

She was laden with bundles—most returning steerage passengers are—sorry-looking bundles and bags that suggest a sordid collection of things saved through frugality or sentiment. As she had but two hands she couldn't help the other passenger for the steerage up the gangway. Now, the other passenger was about the size you could conveniently slip into your overcoat pocket alongside your tobacco box, pipe, and bundle of offshore papers. She was flaxen-haired and by the same inventory you would have noticed that her hair was done up in a pigtail, she being of the pigtail age, tied with a shoestring, and that she was quite bareheaded; but that wasn't the feature that attracted me most. It was her eyes. Potts, the purser, was there. He hasn't time to be either sociable or sarcastic when the *Albania's* clearing port, but he'd scrambled back to ask me a question, and as they went by said, soft-like: "Good Lord, doctor, look at those eyes, will you!"

They were worth looking at. Say, I never saw so much of mischief and confidence all tangled up in the look of any one as there was in that baby's, for

she wasn't much more than that, after all.

"Hello!" she said to Potts, and Potts, grim old chap that he usually is, smiled like the father of a family of nine and answered: "Hello!"

That was her introduction.

The next morning, when we were off Nantucket lightship and the weather was a little thick I made my first round through the steerage on my regular inspection. You see in the first day's confusion we have to go hurriedly; but on the second, when things have steadied down a bit, we search for indications of febrile maladies and such that may have been overlooked. I came across the pigtail girl—aft—playing all alone. She'd uncoiled a loose line and was arranging it in patterns, either with the idea of tripping somebody or else because she had some vague notion of her own as to how a ship should be run.

"What are you doing out here?" I asked, trying to appear serious.

She looked at me a moment and then came and held up her hands. I'm not a man of family or I suppose I should have been quicker to see that she wanted to be taken into arms; so I stood like a dummy. Her face grew long and her lips trembled a bit before I understood. Then I picked her up and she snuggled against me with a sigh fit for a grown-up.

"Why, what's the matter, baby?" I asked, sensing that she was troubled.

"I'm 'stremely lonesome," she replied in such a tone that I laughed at the plaintive "'stremely." "There ain't nobody wants me and nobody will play with me and mudder's 'stremely unwell."

Now what the deuce was I to do? I suppose it will sound foolish when I tell you I made the round that morning, down through the steerage, out into the hospital aft, up through the pharmacy and out on the deck again with a little girl in my arms, flaxen-haired, pigtailed, and not very tidy. Indeed, I admit—in view of my later affection for her with reluctance—that she was "'stremely" grubby. I was compelled to watch over her a bit more not because I wanted to, but because her mother was really very ill. Potts helped me. It's a funny thing to see a ship's banker, a staid man accustomed to accounts and the reckoning of dollars, down on his knees in a surgeon's stateroom trying to amuse a chit of a girl, as if to keep her from crying was the most important thing in the world; but Potts did. and their friendship is part of this yarn.

Both of us were too busy on the following day to devote much time to her, and she, wanting to be amused, had her own way. I don't suppose there was ever a more thorough or careful ship's inspection than she made. We had complaints from some staterooms whose doors she had opened with her chubby hands, thus taking their occupants unawares, because, being informal, she had failed to rap.

MacRogers, the second engineer, who is a bully good sort and understands children, brought her back before she had completed the round. He'd been on watch when she ambled out over the gratings, high above the place where the flying steel sings and whines and whirs all day and night, and had made a frantic run and caught her for fear she'd fall over and make a drop of forty or fifty feet. MacRogers isn't a clean man when he's on duty. Bless me! There were marks all over her when he brought her back—so many marks that her pinafore couldn't have shown another one and her face had not been spared the big Scotchman's caresses. She whimpered a little from disappointment.

"He's been 'stremely rude," she said, with baby petulance. "He wouldn't let me go on down where all the shiny things go round. I'm not quite sure I like him."

And MacRogers looked hurt.

I'd have sent her back to the steerage but her mother didn't recover. It was one of those cases of seasickness, rare to be sure but not unprecedented, where work, and worry, and perhaps grief have taken such toll that the worn-out heart is glad to rest and stops at

last without care for what is left behind or work undone. For three days I watched over her, did the best I could, and lost the fight. She went out the same as she came aboard, phlegmatic, patient, and silent. I'm not a tender-hearted man. I've a horror of scenes of any kind and hate blubbery people; but when I laid her back and said: "Hang it all! That's too bad," I happened to think of the five-year-old girl and somehow—this is on the level—it hurt. Poor little mascot with the pigtail! She couldn't understand why her mother didn't answer when she came up behind me to the berth or why I carried her from the hospital and refused to let her pass back through the closed doors. For a moment her belief in me seemed to falter.

We gave the mother to the sea that takes us all some time, sooner or later—gave her to it at dawn before the passengers were awake. I read the service myself. Potts wasn't there. He was down in my cabin watching a sleeping girl and wondering how she would take it when she learned that there was no longer any one in the third class that had even the slightest interest in her or her future.

It suppose that is what you would call the beginning of it all—the place where she became something more to us than a kid out in the steerage. Potts came into my stateroom the next day and sat for a long time and looked at our charge without saying anything. He didn't know a lot about women or children because he'd been too busy with his everlasting accounts. His home was the ship and the sea, and the only variation in his orbit was shore leave and the annual vacation.

"I never cared for babies," he growled after a while between puffs of his pipe. "Got a particular dislike for girl babies, too."

I didn't answer. It wasn't worth while, and besides I was writing a few prescriptions.

"Pills," he said tentatively, "I suppose we'll have to turn her over to her folks when we reach Naples. That's where she's booked for."

I hadn't contemplated bidding my charge farewell before. I stopped writing, but didn't look up. I had a presentiment that I should miss her and a certitude that some unaccustomed regard for her had sprung up, budded and bloomed in the few days that I'd known her. You see she was the first family I'd ever had or fallen heir to through force of circumstances.

"I suppose so," I answered at last, for want of something better to say. My voice had a touch of malaria or what is known to some States' passengers as "the shakes"; so, to cover it up, I added: "Good riddance, I'm sure."

Potts glared at me, got to his feet, and said: "Humph!" The carpenter had to repair the hinges of my stateroom door after he'd gone out. Awful ill-tempered fellow—Potts!

It's fourteen days without a head wind from New York to Naples, including the stop at the Gib where his majesty, Lord bless him, keeps several Tommys to watch over the straits. I counted all the days on the trip because I knew I shouldn't be glad to get into port again, and each morning when I woke it was with a sense of ungladness. The mascot slept in the lower berth in my stateroom, although the matron had wanted to care for her and had said no man ought to have charge of a "poor little orphing what had lost its mother and didn't have no one to look arfter 'er." Being a qualified officer and a surgeon and knowing my own rights I had put an end to that protest by saying: "Hawkins, mind your own affairs."

By the way, what foolish things some women are and what fool things they find to growl about. As if it were any of Hawkins' lookout that I put the mascot's pinafore on wrong side foremost! Nobody knows the difference, anyway, and it's considerable handier to button them in front where, while you're doing it, you can have a look at the subject's face and exchange confidences on all you have to do during the daytime when the seas are running high and the sick bays are full. But I suppose I shouldn't say anything against Haw-

kins' sense of fitness, and I couldn't find fault with her integrity, for she proved a good sort, after all. She went through the mascot's belongings and found some more pinafores and other things. I didn't know exactly what they were for or whether they went fore or aft until she showed me. It was my first and only experience. Ever try to dress a five-year-old girl? Awful job, ain't it? They do wiggle so!

Thanks to the same Hawkins the mascot began to look real clean and nice. I found out later that Hawkins used to wash and iron the mascot's things nights, which was real kind considering that a matron's life isn't an easy one and she has work enough to do, so that when evening comes she's glad to go to her berth. Indeed under soap and water and laundering we were all rather proud of the mascot when she appeared on deck walking with Potts or following me when I went through the steerage.

The dispensary's aft on the steerage deck, and it was there my journey always ended. She used to accompany me to its seclusion and sit on a pile of medical journals while I went through the list of patients. Then, when the ship's inspection came, she would come along at a respectful distance behind the captain, Potts, Davidson, the chief steward, and me, most always carrying a rag doll the matron had made for her. With her change of attire had come a ribbon to replace the shoestring, and Davidson had words with the matron because he said it looked to him like a piece of ribbon out of an undergarment. He got a yellow ribbon off a bunch of cigars which he swore looked more beautiful and tied it on and I was compelled to arbitrate. After that the mascot went ribbonless and with flying hair that was all right save that it tousled itself dreadfully when she slept.

Once when I combed it in the morning she cried and the matron forgot my official dignity, came bolting back to my door, battered on it with her fists, and called me a brute. Then she insisted on ribbons, but I stood firm because I couldn't bear to see it tied up and it was so pretty in the mornings when I stooped over to awaken her. I used to kiss her pretty lips and take her in my arms—soft, round little thing that she was—and get her out of her tiny nighty and into those puzzling things she had to wear in the daytime.

Did she miss her mother that we'd given to the sea? Yes, sometimes, and then she would cry bitterly; but one learns to lie for gentleness' sake and give excuses which are as balm to five-year-old minds.

Well, so it was, and in this fashion, that we skipped along doing a three hundred knots or better each day, until we got to Naples where we expected to say good-by to the diminutive thing that somehow or another had wound itself into our narrowed affairs until she had become a major part of our existence. The *Albania* pulled up to the Immaculatela, the tugs came off, and we prepared to part with the mascot. That is, the others did. I don't like babies, but I'd a mind to make sure that whoever came for her was worthy of having her in charge and—well—to keep track of her; but no one came to claim her. Potts apparently had some sort of notion similar to mine, for he snooped around every minute he could spare from ship's business.

Our spirits rose and we were elated. I'm honest, however, in telling you that although we wanted to keep her, we did all we could to find to whom she belonged, but found nothing. Our very best efforts to discover any of her people or friends, or who or what her mother had been, failed. We cleared port with her aboard. We went to Trieste, Fiume, Palermo, and started back to Naples for the westward trip.

She had grown quite familiar with the back deck; but, do you know, I'm not quite sure whether the skipper had ever noticed her or not as we swung up the Adriatic and had cleared from Palermo coming back? Then he had his attention called rather abruptly. You see, of all the forty cats she'd made friends, knew them all by name, played with them according to their individual ideas of sport, and administered re-

wards or punishments as she saw fit; brought one with a broken leg to me and insisted on my making splints for it because "That's what you did for the sailorman," and "You can mend most anybody, can't you, Mister Dockitor?" So I made them.

The skipper came out one morning and saw a wildly disordered little wretch tugging frantically at a life-buoy which was too heavy for her to lift from the hooks. I'm sure he was astonished. Anyway, he stopped and growled at her.

"What are you doing there?" he asked.

She was crying when she turned round to him and explained that one of her forty cats had fallen overboard and said she was "'stremely" anxious to throw the life-preserver over because one of the officers had told her that when any one fell overboard the round white things were to save their lives. The skipper had a hard time to explain that the *Albania* couldn't stop in the middle of the Adriatic to pick up a lost cat, and has since assured me that she told him he was no gentleman. That was the beginning of her dislike for him, ill-founded perhaps but quite tangible. She gave much thought to his case. She asked me a while later if he was God, and when I told her I didn't think it an established fact, she doubted my judgment. She looked perplexed and grieved. Noticing it, I picked her up and sat her on the edge of the dispensary table.

"What's the matter, Miss Pigtail?" I asked.

"Is Mr. Davidson a good man?" she replied irrelevantly, I thought.

"Why, yes, I'm sure he is."

"Well, I thought good men didn't lie, and I just can't really for surely know who to believe," she answered, still frowning.

I waited for her to continue.

"Ain't the Lord the same as God?"

I sat up and wondered what was coming and covered my ignorance of theology by saying I believed so.

"Then Mr. Davidson didn't tell the truth because you say the captain isn't God and Mr. Davidson told me the captain was the ''igh and mighty lord of the ship.'"

Those were some of the things I had to explain. But about the skipper. The very same evening he had seen her he gave us a heart shock as we were standing outside the first-class entrance hall by coming up and asking: "Potts, when are you going to send that youngster ashore? I thought she was booked for Naples."

Potts mumbled. Davidson went outside and hung over the rail, appearing glum, and the matron looked daggers at the skipper's back. I pretended not to hear and for the time it was dropped. We got back to Naples to find that there was still no knowledge of anything in all the world that belonged to or had any care for the mascot. And so we cleared port with the young lady still sleeping in my lower berth, hugging me tight when she awoke and was frightened in the night, when the ship rolled wildly, and always going back to sleep again in my arms before I retucked her in the bed. I'm sure that she wasn't much in evidence from Naples to Gibraltar, or for a day thereafter; because, to admit the truth, between us we kept her concealed in our various quarters.

Then we gradually let her out, after cautioning her not to encroach on that portion of the boat deck bordering the bridge, beneath which were the chart house and the quiet staterooms sacred to the use of the skipper. To my amusement I discerned that she kept a weather eye open for the captain, and if she saw him emerging from his doorway always scuttled behind one of the boats, from which she would peep furtively until he disappeared. Indeed she appeared afraid of him.

In this delightful state of uncertainty we passed two days after leaving the Gib and then, behold, the skipper spotted her as he came around the corner of the chart house and she dove behind the midships boat like a frightened cat. He stopped and looked

thoughtful, took a few steps and edged around until he could see her. She was so palpably frightened that he refrained from saying anything, but after a moment's scrutiny backed out and trudged down to the purser's office. Potts was called on to explain but, so help me Bob, took all the responsibility. An hour later I had to go to the skipper's office.

"Doctor," he said, "Potts seems to have gone a little bit daffy. He's had that orphan stowed away."

"Oh, no," I answered, not wanting Potts to take the blame. "I'm afraid, sir, I'm responsible for that. I stowed her away."

He looked at me rather straight for a moment and then turned around to his desk.

"Well, whoever is responsible for her must have her sent to some place as soon as we reach New York," he said quietly, and I knew by his tone he was in earnest. "The *Albania* isn't a floating orphan asylum. I want that understood!"

I said "Yes, sir," and went out feeling rather troubled.

Davidson went up to make his inspection of the skipper's rooms and found him in. His first words proved that Miss Pigtail was still on his mind.

"Davidson," he said, "I suppose you know there's an orphan on board here—a little girl? Who's taking care of her?"

"I am, sir," Davidson promptly replied.

The skipper whirled round and stared at him. Davidson thought some one was going to get a rigging and looked sober.

"I presume," the captain remarked, with genteel sarcasm, "that you perhaps are responsible for her being here; that you probably stowed her away when we came out of Trieste, Fiume, Palermo, Naples, and Gibraltar?"

"Yes, sir, it was my fault," Davidson answered, not knowing that he was the third one accepting blame for infringement of rules.

If the captain had been of the old school it's probable he would have bellowed; as it was he muttered something like "Well, I'll be——" stopped, appeared annoyed, and then finished: "Well, since you're responsible see that she's sent to some charity place within a day after we land in New York. Let there be no mistake about it. That is all."

Davidson went out biting his lips and tugging at his red mustache. It looked as if the mascot would have to go. We conspirators were a sorrowful crowd, although we did not expose the inward state of our feelings to each other.

New York came, where we were to give her up or disobey orders. I had an idea at last, so instead of looking for an orphanage slipped around to the company's uptown office and asked the price of a half-rate steerage ticket for the next trip. Just as the clerk said eight dollars, I heard a fellow asking for the same thing down at the other end of the counter and his voice sounded familiar. I looked out of the corner of my eye and I'll be hanged if there wasn't Davidson, also in civilian clothes and unknown to the clerks. Well, we exchanged confidences and chipped in for the ticket, having it made according to the regulations, which necessitated our consigning Miss Pigtail to the matron's care.

As we were going out we almost collided with a man whose skin looked as though it had absorbed all the grease from a big engine room and here was MacRogers. Of course he tried to bluff us, but eventually confessed he was there on the same errand. We went back aboard wondering whether we dared break the news; but at the mess table Potts broke it for us, or rather to us.

"Doc," he said, "the mascot is to be with us going east again, so there's no need of sending her ashore."

My knife fell beside my plate.

"Some one's bought a passage for her," Potts went on serenely.

Then he leaned his head over toward me and admitted he was the "some one." So we had that ticket canceled and divided the expense equally be-

tween the crowd of us who had the same idea.

We hadn't got beyond the Hook before the skipper discovered the mascot and sent for Potts.

"See here," he said, his face set the way it always is when there's anything twisted in discipline, "I thought that kid was to be sent ashore here? There wasn't any misunderstanding in my orders, was there? I speak English, don't I? I don't mumble my words that you've ever noticed, or anything like that?"

"She has a ticket, sir," Potts answered. "Some one is sending her back in care of the matron."

That took all the wind from the old man's sails. We had him beaten.

"Oh!" he said. "Very well. That's all. Good morning!"

And Potts came outside the cabin and grinned behind his glasses and gave the news along the line until it seeped down to MacRogers, who poked his head out and winked at me as I came past.

We cleared the banks, but the weather was thick with a half-bad sea, and a nasty head wind that came in puffs and made gray days—rough days. The passenger list was light, made up of poor sailors and mighty glad to be below. With but few exceptions we officers and Miss Pigtail had the decks all to ourselves. Her sea legs were so good by this time that none of us worried when we saw her come up through the mist lugging some of the cats, or sitting under the lee side of a boat singing baby songs and playing with some of the toys we had bought her while ashore. It was just as the early watch was about due to go off, on one of those worst days, when she arose to a point of fame among us of the *Albania*. She had turned out before the rising bugle, had her bowl of oatmeal in the pantry where she had won the case-hardened heart of the cook, and gone above to see what the day promised.

Baker was our first officer then, and having served in the navy, wanted everything aboard ship kept up to the mark. A section of awning on the boat deck was hanging slack and one of the stops was tied in a sloppy fashion. He sighted it, looked around for a sailor, and discovered that Miss Pigtail was the only person in sight; but as she wasn't an A. B. he could scarcely call on her. So he leaped to the rail to take a new turn on the cord and bring the awning taut. Just then an extra heavy wave hit the *Albania* broadside on, she gave a lurch and, sure-footed as he was, Baker slipped. There was an instant's spasmodic clutching, a cry, and he fell far out while the liner, careless of the loss, plunged on. The mascot saw it all.

The captain was standing before his shaving glass when the door burst open, there was a shrill cry, and he looked down to see Miss Pigtail standing before him with her hands clutched and her face very white.

"Please—please, sir," she said, with a world of childish entreaty, "may I throw a pursurver over now? Mr. Baker's fallen off the ship and I think he might need it."

Now the skipper's a man of action. He threw his razor on the shelf, careless of where it might fall, and tore at the tube to the bridge until it shrilled and shrieked in a way betokening something requiring prompt reply. There was a patter of running feet as the officer on duty jumped to the mouthpiece.

"Man overboard!" came up from the hollows below.

It was like a call to action evoking an orderly confusion of haste. There were three sharp blasts of the whistle, the shout to the quartermaster "Port your helm," the sounds of the gongs in the engine room, the wild rush of the boat crew in response to the overboard signal, and she was manned and in readiness to be lowered away before the liner, in a long stately sweep, had turned back toward the figure that could be seen bobbing up and down in the smother and swimming with slow deliberation, intent only on keeping afloat. As the *Albania* turned, slowing down, the chief from the port

wing of the bridge threw the life belt which Miss Pigtail had pleaded for, and watched it fall not far from Baker's side. He, still swimming doggedly in the whirl of waves, saw it and began working slowly toward it. There was another shout from the bridge to the waiting boat where the fourth officer, tiller in hand, waited to do his part.

"Lower away!"

The blocks creaked as the ropes slid rapidly through, and she dropped downward to meet the combers at the side. She got away with a fast stroke while the *Albania* surged past the mark under her own impetus. Quite slowly they pulled Baker aboard to fall exhausted and chilled into the waiting blankets, while the careful fourth proceeded with due steadiness to drag the life-preserver in, mindful of the fact that everything costs money and company property must be conserved.

The *Albania* had stopped and was sluggishly answering the swell when the boat pulled alongside, hooked in the tackles and was hoisted up the big black side past the lower ports and the faces that formed a fringe along the main-deck rail. I had restoratives and stimulants ready when they lugged Baker to his berth. There were a few signals from the bridge, a sudden start of the screws, and the *Albania,* as if annoyed by her halt, dashed away to the west'ard at full speed. The skipper gave a big sigh, saw that Baker was coming around all right, and with a face expressing great relief retraced his way to his stateroom.

There, motionless, with hands that seemed not to have been unclasped and a woolen bear hugged beneath her arm, stood Miss Pigtail. She looked up at him with tearful eyes as he entered and her lips trembled a little; but she spoke quite bravely.

"Have you come to throw me over into the water now?" she asked, and the skipper with his mouth hanging open looked down at her.

"Throw you over? Throw you overboard? What for?"

"Mr. Davidson told me that when little girls came into your room you threw them over into the sea, and—and——"

"Well?"

"I think I'm 'stremely sorry I had to come in," she faltered.

I came in to report to him that Baker was all right and would be topside up within an hour or so, and what do you think I found? The skipper was down on his knees on the floor hugging Miss Pigtail very tight and, if I ain't mistaken, his own eyes looked a trifle damp around the lashes.

"Doctor," he said, climbing to his feet and still holding her, "there isn't any Victoria Cross for baby girls; but that thing we call heroism which makes one give life for another under terrifying circumstances is not confined to adults."

I felt rather solemn all of a sudden. The old man doesn't usually talk that way.

"She thought she was giving her life to save Baker," he went on, "and—and—damn it all! She was game to be thrown overboard after he'd been fished out."

He coughed so loudly that the mascot dropped her woolly bear, and when he stooped to pick it up I slipped away, leaving her still in his arms.

So that was what made her the mascot of the *Albania,* so called, so registered in the ship's articles, and so remembered. We've a purse for her now. All us fellows pay so much a month for her board and education in one of the best kid schools in Europe. She still has rather a belief that the skipper is omnipotent, that Potts, Davidson, and MacRogers are about the greatest men that ever lived, that Baker was worth saving, and that I can heal any ailment to which flesh is heir.

But best of all, so we of the syndicate think, is the fact that when we visit her, singly or in a body, Miss Pigtail assures us with marked gravity that she's " 'stremely anxious to grow up fast and be a very great lady, but not quite sure that she wouldn't rather be a sailor."



The Lady of the Marble Heart in several disguises. In "A Fool There Was" she proves the truth of a Burne-Jones painting and a Kipling poem, while showing in "The Conflict" that there is no fool like an old fool. In "Sham" Henrietta Crosman has a rôle that suits her well. "The Bachelor" brings an actor up and an actress down. But Clyde Fitch's other comedy, "The Happy Marriage," shows that it is well to make haste slowly. An excellent cast provided for "An Englishman's Home." Sothern and Mantell continue to bear the banner of classics

THE conniving woman, the scheming woman, the heartless, treacherous, dangerous woman, the woman with a purpose—all kinds and conditions of woman, in fact, have recently been shown to us. If anything the woman of evil influence has had a shade the best of it in this month's plays, though occasionally her reform, before the curtain fell, has proved the truth of Pope's line: "Woman's at best a contradiction still." However, you could—and you would—prove almost any of Pope's sayings with examples the month's plays have furnished. As for instance, that oft-repeated one:

> Vice is a monster of so frightful mien
> As to be hated needs but to be seen,
> Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

Of course, *we* don't, but as *Dundreary* would say, "some other fellow" does, which makes a difference, and has made several plays.

Years ago—long before most of the present readers of AINSLEE'S were out of knee trousers and ankle-length skirts—famous actors and actresses used to appear once in so often in "The Marble Heart." This calcareous organ was supposed to repose in the flinty bosom of *Marco,* most beautiful of ladies, and also most unkind, who smiled at the passion of her lovers and went proudly on her way leaving death and destruction in her wake.

But as there is nothing new under the sun, so there is nothing new under the spot light, and the-lady-of-the-marble-heart has come back once more to lead her victims to despair. Only nowadays we know her as The Vampire or The Siren or perhaps under that more general term, The Stage Adventuress, which covers a multitude of sins.

Sir Philip Burne-Jones, the English painter of long, lean, and lissome ladies, produced a picture called "The Vampire," for which Mrs. Patrick Campbell is said to have posed; and Rudyard Kipling put the moral of the picture into a poem. Now, Mr. Porter Emerson Browne has built a play about the picture and the poem, of which this verse of Kipling's appears to provide the keynote:

A fool there was and he made his prayer
(Even as you and I)
To a rag and a bone and a hank of hair.
We called her the woman who did not care,
But the fool he called her his lady fair
(Even as you and I).

In Mr. Browne's play the marble-hearted vampire lady is a person of clinging draperies, a creepy walk, a fascinating smile, and a shrill, raucous laugh, who passes in and out of the play sprinkling red rose leaves and offering carmine-lipped kisses to her hapless, helpless victims. Her "Kiss me, fool," is, in fact, more of a threat than a promise, and before the first act is over you see one unfortunate youth blow out his brains in preference to satisfying the osculatory demand. When you see the other fool a shivering, tottering, broken-down victim of the "Vampire," you realize that the youth has made on the whole the wiser choice. With him, at any rate, death has been sure and sudden.

The other fool—the one who runs through the play and figures in the title—is put down on the programme as *The Husband,* while the remaining important characters are described respectively as *The Wife, The Child, The Friend,* etc. All is merry as the wedding bells until *The Husband* takes passage on an ocean liner, called abroad on an important mission for the government. Then he meets *The Woman,* who is sunning herself in a steamer chair which she has made the steward place on the exact spot where, a moment before, he mopped up the blood of the younger fool who killed himself rather than be kissed. By the time *The Husband* gets back home his wife has learned of his unfaithfulness, the President of the United States has dismissed him from his office, and his friends have ceased to speak to him as they pass by. Only one, *The Friend,* who nurses a hopeless affection for *The Wife,* lingers on in the hope of leading him back to righteous living. But the fool sinks lower and lower until brandy and *The Woman* have done their worst. Then *The Wife* decides to make a last effort to reclaim him and it looks as though she might succeed. But she unwisely leaves him alone for a few moments just before the curtain falls and the vampire comes sneaking in to ask for a few more kisses. By this time the fool is heartily sick of her and seizes her by the throat, but the effort exhausts the last vestige of his strength and he falls lifeless at her feet.

There are occasional lighter moments in the piece than those I have described but they are merely incidental, the main object being to drive home the lesson which is as old as the ten commandments, wherein, in fact, it may be found explicitly set down.

Robert Hilliard, an actor of some skill and personal authority, plays the fool vigorously and manfully in the earlier scenes and with a sufficiently painful exposition of the devastating influences of too much brandy and too much vampire in the later phases of the character; while Miss Katherine Kaelred, an Australian actress, new to our stage, has the requisite personal beauty and hardness of speech and manner to suggest the temptress of the story. She is an efficient, without being in any sense a brilliant actress. A very charming child, Emily Wurster, figures effectively in the play, and Mr. William Courtleigh does the best work of his later career as the generous, self-sacrificing friend.

Somebody—probably several somebodies—said that no man is too old to be fooled by a woman, but though the victim in Mr. Maurice Samuel's play, "The Conflict," proved the truth of the adage, "no fool like an old fool," you can feel some sympathy for him. For old *Cesare Resapha* in this play has the woman "wished on him" which, though in effect the same, is quite another matter from wishing her on himself.

Mr. Samuels has undertaken to make a play from Balzac's *"La Peau de Chagrin,"* generally translated as "The Wild Ass's Skin," and a work which is absorbing not only as a piece of fiction but as a philosophical discussion of the power of mind and will. Mr. Samuels willed to make a play of it

but he lacked the power, and unfortunately he sidetracked his collaborator Balzac immediately after the first act.

When we first meet *Cesare Resapha* it is under the same conditions as in the novel. He is an antiquarian who has made a fortune selling curios to collectors and like Jephthah, father in Israel, he has one daughter, though he does not regard her as the treasure *Hamlet* cites. One of the visitors at the old man's shop is *Raphael de Valentin,* who has sighed in vain for the love of old *Cesare's* daughter, another of the marble-hearted tribe, whereupon he has turned to the gaming table and lost his last sou. Now he is about to drown himself but the antiquarian, who prides himself upon the simple life, pooh-poohs *Raphael's* gloomy point of view and gives him a lot of good advice. Also, he places in the young man's hands a piece of magic skin, the possession of which will enable its owner, for the wishing, to have anything he wants. *Raphael* is highly delighted at the idea of possessing the talisman until he discovers that with each wish the skin will shrink while his days on earth must correspondingly decrease. He grows so peevish at this discovery that he blurts out a wish that his old benefactor will fall in love with a ballet girl and the magic talisman promptly does the rest. The ballet girl does not appear during the progress of the play, but the effect of the wish is apparent when old *Cesare,* rakishly dressed, arrives to recount his amatory conquest and to bemoan the money that it cost. But the pace is too much for him and he pays for it with his life, while his ballet girl charmer is carrying on a flirtation with a more youthful admirer.

In the meantime *Raphael's* marble-hearted lady has learned to love him, but by this time he has found a new affinity in a sweet and simple maiden whom Mr. Samuels, unlike Balzac, hasn't the heart to disappoint. So it is made to appear that, though the magic skin has worked wonders in the way of suddenly acquired riches for its young possessor, it has no power on his life.

Mr. Samuels has twisted and turned the incidents and characters of the novel so that even Balzac wouldn't know them, and in a spirit of patriotic fervor—he is a San Franciscan—he has brought a California mining expert all the way to Paris to boost the climate of his native State and lend a hand in working to the happy ending. About the best that has come of "The Conflict" is Rennold Wolf's remark: "Somebody wished it on the Garden."

The type of woman played by Henrietta Crosman in her new play, "Sham," is neither a siren nor a vampire, though, as a worker of damage to society at large, she is more persistently active perhaps than either of the others. She is, in short, a very charming and attractive person with blood and family to commend her, known as "a poor relation" to her nearest kin, but ready to "bluff it" through the world until she can land a man with money in the matrimonial net. A spender, with a love of beauty and a lack of coin, *Katharine Van Riper* sponges on her friends and dodges her creditors, trying, in the meantime, with the assistance of two designing aunts, to make up her mind to marry a rich young suitor, though she loves another man who cannot pay her debts but who offers her the delights of a little cottage in the wilderness.

It is the first day of the month when the play opens and though the wolf is not yet at the door, his advance agent, in the form of the bill collector, is numerously present. *Katharine* tricks her aunts into buying her costly furs and wheedles expensive presents from her men admirers. But underneath her mercenary front there beats a human heart. To prove it she buys expensive flowers from a little struggling florist, whose account she never pays. When all is lost save honor and a stack of bills she is suddenly awakened to the iniquity of her practices by a preachment of the man she loves. Ignorant of the wound he is inflicting he inveighs against the grafters of the social world, whereupon *Katharine* 'bout faces, says good-by to her friends at a

dance, and announces that she is going home in a hack—a hired hack—to be paid for by herself, though her host has generously offered to send her in his auto. She thinks the family heirloom, a string of pearls, will get her out of her financial mess, but discovers that her father had substituted paste for the real gems years ago. And when the poor suitor arrives to beg her to be his she announces that she will not marry until she has paid off all her debts. This she is able to accomplish ultimately through the interested generosity of the aunts, who advance the money sooner than see the family name disgraced by a suit for debt.

The conclusion is lame, of course, and the play, which was written by Geraldine Bonner and Elmer Harris, has other weaknesses of a technical kind that need not be discussed, but it provides a bright and snappy entertainment, and gives Miss Crosman the best rôle she has had since she appeared in "Sweet Kitty Bellairs." She is an actress, too, whose presence is desirable on the stage, and who has probably forgotten more about the art of acting than many of the present female stars ever knew. Although she never quite gets into the skin of any rôle she is always happy and adroit in comedy—facile, bright, and eminently pleasing.

Mr. Clyde Fitch, most prolific of American playwrights, has been represented this month by two comedies, neither of which will add materially to his reputation, though each has attained a minor popularity. In "The Bachelor," presumably prepared to bring Mr. Charles Cherry to the front as a featured luminary, he shows no particular happiness of invention, though there are a plenitude of bright lines and the occasional happiness in detail which reveals him as an observer of life.

The bachelor is a Wall Street broker who takes a friendly interest in his young stenographer and means to take no further interest in her until he is advised by the young woman's brother that his intentions have been misunderstood. When he learns that the young woman is in love with him he offers to marry her and she is in a seventh heaven of delight. But she discovers the reason of his proposal and throws him over. Now, of course, he realizes for the first time how great a part she has played in his lonely life and persuades her to think better of it.

As a star, Mr. Cherry is just as excellent an actor as he was before his name was ablaze on the signs. Mr. Fitch has given him a rôle that fits as well as his best suit of clothes, and that by the way is saying much, for Mr. Cherry dresses like a gentleman and acts like one. The best player in the supporting company is Miss Christine Blessing, an actress of ripe experience and charming quality; a lesser part is done very attractively by Miss Janet Beecher. But Miss Ruth Maycliffe, who went up like a rocket in Fitch's "Girls," now comes down like a stick, and provides a very pretty illustration of the fact that it is sometimes better to make haste slowly.

In a measure the same truth is brought home by Miss Doris Keane in Mr. Fitch's latest play, "The Happy Marriage," for Miss Keane's advancement to stellardom has been too rapid for her own and the public's best interests. She is a far better actress than Miss Maycliffe, but up to date has shown more of temperament and beauty than of experience and resource. "The Happy Marriage," too, while it contains much of Fitch at his best, is marred by many of his extravagances. It might be the sequel to "The Bachelor," for this central figure is a stock broker, *Frederick Thornton,* a serious-minded man, devoted to his business and obliged to think about it when he comes home at night, though his light-hearted little wife, *Joan,* resents the encroachment on time which she feels belongs to her. As *Frederick* cannot, or will not, let his business slide, she finds another playmate in *Paul Mayne,* a philandering young fellow who likes a flirtation but is frightfully upset when he finds that his attentions have been taken seriously. *Joan* plans to elope with him, having first arranged that it shall be quite

respectable and regular and that she shall be accompanied by her child and maid, but upon arriving at the young man's room, she discovers from some letters that he has been gallivanting with a chorus girl, whereupon she returns home a sadder and a wiser wife. Presumably the *Thorntons* lived happily ever after.

There are surface indications that Mr. Fitch intended in this comedy to write a piece in the more serious and substantial vein of "The Truth," but he veered from his purpose. The result is somewhat disappointing, though the play has some entertaining qualities. Mr. Edwin Arden appears as the husband, and as usual, plays firmly and skillfully; and the part of the serpent in the *Thorntons'* Eden is in the hands of Morton Sills, a promising young actor.

So much publicity was given to "An Englishman's Home" when the play was first produced in London that no lengthy description of it is necessary here. Opinions of its value as an entertainment will depend largely on the receptive faculties of those who see it. People whose sense of humor is satisfied by the colored atrocities of the Sunday comic page will find its satire somewhat lacking in obviousness, but I confess that I do not like to get my humor in a ladle, so I enjoyed "An Englishman's Home" immensely, and was both amused and thrilled by the pictures of the stubborn, hard-headed Britisher in his "castle" who refuses to recognize the rights of the invaders, although his house is tumbling down about his ears. One of the best all round casts that Charles Frohman has recently presented brought out both the comic and dramatic values of the piece, with that splendid actor, Mr. William Hawtrey, portraying perfectly the stolid British householder. George M. Graham, Dallas Anderson, J. H. Benrimo, Edgar Norton, Ernest Stallard, Nellie Thorne, and Nellie Malcolm were individually excellent.

Those two standard bearers of classic drama, Mr. E. H. Sothern and Mr. Robert B. Mantell, have been appearing in repertoire. Mr. Sothern, in addition to his familiar rôles, has acted *Richelieu*, in Bulwer Lytton's bombastical play, while Mr. Mantell has added *King John* to his Shakesperian list. Conscientious and careful performances, both of them, without a suggestion of unusual inspiration or great imagination, they have indicated chiefly a seriousness of intention, and as such, are entitled to respect.

PRIVILEGE AND PRICE

NO hands so busy are with tasks,
No thoughts so filled with care,
No feet so far afield have strayed
Where sin hath laid its snare,
But the meek heart may cloisters find,
For shrift and song and prayer.

No sense there is so cleansed of sin,
No penance so well done,
No galling cross so humbly borne,
No crown so proudly won,
But the rich heart its meed shall give
Of toil, 'neath storm and sun.

MARY WHEELER.



Stories with a point characteristic of Ainslee's. "The Story of Thyrza" possesses Alice Brown's usual good qualities. Louise Forsslund's "Old Lady Number 31" irresistible and refreshing in its pathos and humor. "The Butler's Story," by Arthur Train, a tale of the newly rich. Extremely well done is Louise Closser Hale's "The Actress." Dreary and almost puerile is "The Perfume of the Lady in Black," by Gaston Leroux. Facts are scorned in Jennette Lee's "Simeon Tettow's Shadow." Action in plenty to keep the interest of the reader in "The Bronze Bell," by Louis Joseph Vance. B. M. Bower shows thorough familiarity of the subject and a rare gift of story telling in "The Lonesome Trail"

WE do not believe that you will find anything more satisfactory among the June magazines than in the table of contents of this current number of AINSLEE'S. The persevering readers of monthly periodicals, as a class, care more for the short stories than they do for anything else that is offered them, and their taste for this kind of reading has become an established habit. You, of course, know all about this, though probably the reasons for it do not particularly interest you any more than they do us. We both are satisfied with the recognition of the fact; further than that we are not concerned, except as to where you are to get what you want and how we are to supply it.

If you have not already examined our table of contents for this month just turn to it now and you will find that we have given you eleven short stories. And there are two significant facts in connection with this that we want you to consider, first that every one of these pieces of fiction is a real story; not merely a sketch or a bit of characterization, or psychological analysis or descriptive writing, but a well-constructed plot with a definite point or climax toward which the action inevitably works, arresting the interest at the outset and maintaining it to the end. In the second place we venture to say that you will not find so large a number of short stories in any of the other magazines of the month and of all of them that you read the majority will lack plot and action.

Romance, realism, mystery, humor, and pathos, the story of society, of the West, of the theatre, of army life, and of child interest, all are included here, and through all there is a dramatic action of greater or lesser intensity in which you will, for the time being, forget all the annoying things in your lives.

The July number will be another one like this. Mr. MacGrath's serial, "The Goose Girl," will be concluded in July, after one of the most successful runs a serial ever had. The complete novel will be a new story by Edith Macvane. It is a story in the style of "The Adventures of Joujou," "Sister Suz," and "The Scarab of Fortune," which is Miss Macvane's own peculiar manner of story telling. Among the contributors of short stories will be Mary R. S. Andrews and Joseph C. Lincoln.

Houghton, Mifflin & Co. have published another novel by Miss Alice Brown called "The Story of Thyrza," which in some respects is not unlike "Rose McLeod." Its resemblance to the previous story is chiefly in the facility with which she handles certain characters in both books, characters which may be considered as distinctly New England types. In "Rose McLeod" Madame Fulton and Electra stood out as clear-cut, vital personalities; so in this new book Thyrza, Laura, their mother, and Andy are very real people.

It seems as though the keynote of this tale was struck by Petrie Tennant in his discussion with his mother of the question of illegitimacy. Thyrza Tennant had, in the inexperience of eighteen years, mistaken her passion for Andy McAdam for love and as soon as Andy heard she was in trouble he hastened to marry her sister Laura. So Thyrza left to take the consequences alone did so quietly but without concealment, took care of her boy and gave him an education and a start in life with full knowledge of the circumstances of his birth, excepting only the name of his father.

An issue arises when Petrie falls in love and in his communication of the fact to his mother he tries to convince her that she must make a new start in another locality and as a married woman. But she cannot bring herself to practice the deception and refers to the saints, martyrs, even the poets whose hearts had broken upon the flint of a brutal world. He replies: "Once they endured—the big chaps. We don't endure. We conquer." A mystic in business in New York, he thinks, would play the game or "find himself outside the ring."

She insists, however, in clinging to her ideals of the truth and proves that that way lies the path of conquest, not only for herself but for him also.

She, too, has her romance, with Barton Gorse, but it comes too late. Gorse, by the way, is a rather shadowy character. He has great possibilities, which might have been developed with more vigorous handling, but, as it is, in spite of his charm he is rather unsatisfactory.

* * *

"Old Lady Number 31" is the title of Louise Forsslund's new story, published by the Century Company.

It is a most refreshing variation from the flood of pretentious fiction with which the reading public is overwhelmed year after year, and ought to have a hearty welcome from the thousands of jaded readers of conventional best sellers. Simplicity is its distinguishing characteristic; simplicity of conception, of style, and of its people.

A most charming tale of an old couple whose poverty has forced them at last to dispose of all their belongings in order to raise the money to secure their admission to an old men's and an old ladies' home respectively. The auction at which their household effects are sold does not, however, realize more than enough to provide for but one of them, the result being that both are received into the old ladies' home, the husband thus becoming old lady number 31.

The book is filled with that combination of pathos and humor which is always irresistible, and the quaint sayings and doings of Abe and Angy and Blossy and Miss Abigail and Aunt Nancy and Cap'n Sam'l keep the reader constantly alternating between tears and laughter.

It is altogether one of the most original and attractive stories it has been our good fortune to read in a long time.

* * *

Mr. Arthur Train embodies "the reflections, observations and experiences of Mr. Peter Ridges" in a new book which he calls "The Butler's Story," published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

Mr. Ridges is a butler in the employ of one of our old fictional friends who, on this occasion, is presented as Mr. Samuel Carter, one of New York's "newly rich." Mrs. Samuel Carter has social aspirations which, according to the discriminating Ridges, are a cause

of more or less discomfort to her bluff Western husband and of considerable humiliation to her beautiful, cultivated, and good-hearted daughter, Miss Patricia.

The observations of Ridges seem to confirm the reports of other novelists that in all families of social climbers the materfamilias has the villain's rôle. She is always certain sooner or later to involve the whole ambitious enterprise in disaster; and all that is left in the wreckage is a wholesome but poverty-stricken husband for the daughter and the humble home in the West for the old folks, to which they retire satisfied and happy in the recollection of their early love and struggles.

Ridges contemplates Mrs. Carter's fight for social recognition with disapproval of her and with much human sympathy for Miss Patricia and Mr. Amos, but is sustained by his hopes, constantly increased by his association with the despised newly rich, of finally securing a public house in Wapping on Velly, Devon. Thanks to the lavishness of his employers and their friends his dreams of bliss are realized.

There may, of course, be butlers like Ridges; it would be foolish to deny possibilities of any sort. It is not to be supposed, however, that we are to be enlightened often about them by autobiographical sketches. Therefore every one who takes an interest in them as a class should read Ridges' own story.

❧ ❧ ❧

"The Actress," by Louise Closser Hale, published by Harper & Brothers, is a very charming story, made so chiefly by the author's manner of telling it, which, of course, is the most important thing in novel writing or indeed in writing of any kind.

Very much the same story was told in Clara E. Laughlin's "Felicity." It would be a difficult thing to tell an entirely new love story with an actress as a heroine, a wholesome one at any rate. There must be always the conflict between her art and her love with the final triumph of the latter.

After Rhoda Miller has, as she thinks, definitely convinced herself and Aaron Adams that her career on the stage is to be the most important thing in her life, with which love and marriage are incompatible, she takes herself off to England to fill an engagement there. Her experiences abroad constitute the bulk of the tale, to which the love passages with Aaron are merely incidental.

This part of the book is extremely well done and with a fidelity to the facts that can only come from personal knowledge of the life. There is a great deal of human nature in the author's description of the characters and the life encountered by the actress. Altogether she has a good time, but the loyalty of the practical lover she has left behind in New York is not discouraged, and she finally comes to a realization of the fact that her affection for him and his for her are after all much more important than anything which the stage promises her.

❧ ❧ ❧

"The Perfume of the Lady in Black" is a tremendous descent from "The Mystery of the Yellow Room," of which the new book is a sequel. If the author, Gaston Leroux, and the publishers, Brentano's, can explain the mystery of this descent there is a chance that they may give us a better story than they have in this latest production.

"The Mystery of the Yellow Room" was an excellent detective tale; it was well constructed and the mystery appeared so absolutely insoluble that the most ingenious reader's guesses were wide of the mark. Joseph Rouletabille, the young reporter, was a new but plausible type of detective and did his work remarkably well. "The Perfume of the Lady in Black" is altogether another story, however, and if it was written for any other purpose than to renew the exploitation of Rouletabille such purpose is not apparent.

All of the characters in "The Mystery of the Yellow Room" reappear in the new tale. Darzac, Mathilde Stan-

gerson (now married), Professor Stangerson, the Rances, and Sainclair; and M. Leroux gathers them all in the Fort of Hercules, an old feudal castle on the French shore of the Mediterranean. There they exist for several days in mortal dread of Frederick Larsan, who was supposed to have been killed off in "The Mystery of the Yellow Room." Why there should have been such horror of him, no mortal knows from anything that appears in the story. The performances of this castle full of people, entrenching themselves as though to defend their stronghold against an army and a fleet of battleships, shuddering at the slightest sound, regarding each other with suspicious horror, give the tale an air of burlesque, when one remembers that all this is caused by fear of a single man whose motives and purposes are not even explained.

The story is filled with a mass of irrelevant detail about the childhood of Rouletabille; its discursiveness is dreary and the outcome is almost puerile.

* * *

The Century Company has published a new story by Jennette Lee called "Simeon Tettow's Shadow."

It is one of the type of business stories that cheerfully disregards the facts of business life, giving the author's ideas of what might be rather than of what facts and experience have demonstrated as actually possible.

As a rule the great enterprises of the business and industrial world are not dominated by nervous wrecks. If Simeon Tettow was the tremendous influence upon the railroad interests that he is described to be he would probably have had as vigorous and healthy a body; and his confidential assistant would, with equal probability, have been a man of a certain amount, at least, of training and experience.

But facts seem to have played small part in the conception and construction of this tale. Tettow is practically an invalid and the individual who pulls him through his physical as well as his financial crises is an inexperienced office boy, John Bennett, who miraculously developed just the qualities needed for the emergencies.

* * *

Another new story of adventure by Louis Joseph Vance is "The Bronze Bell," published by Dodd, Mead & Company.

The tale opens on the south shore of Long Island where young Mr. Amber unexpectedly encounters an old acquaintance who is living in mysterious seclusion. Amber learns for the first time that his friend is really an Indian prince who is trying to avoid a summons from India to head a new mutiny. He is discovered, however, by an emissary from his principality and rather than return home commits suicide, first exacting from Amber a promise that he will proceed immediately to India and rescue a young English girl, Sophia Farrell, from the clutches of the native conspirators.

This is the introduction, and the story itself is concerned with Amber's startling adventures which begin immediately after his landing at Calcutta. Almost everything that ever happened to an alien in India happens to Amber, but with the assistance of one Labertouche, a secret service officer, he succeeds in his mission and brings the girl home.

There is action enough in the story to keep the reader's attention pretty well concentrated and he has little occasion to think of probabilities.

* * *

"The Lonesome Trail," by B. M. Bower, published by G. W. Dillingham, is a volume of short stories of Montana ranch life.

They are written by one who is thoroughly familiar with the life, the characters, and the locality, and who has a rare gift of story telling and a literary style that is peculiarly adapted to this type of story.

The stories all deal with the outfit —to use a Western expression—of the Flying-U ranch, a company of cowboys

who constitute what they themselves call the Happy Family. Chip and Weary and Happy Jack and Slim and Pink are the characters who figure most prominently in the tales, while the Little Doctor and the schoolmistress supply, most satisfactorily, the feminine element and assist, effectively, in the love experiences of the Happy Family.

Readers of the *Popular Magazine*, in which these tales appeared serially, will probably be glad to know of their publication in book form.

Important New Books.

"Salvator," Perceval Gibbon, Doubleday, Page & Co.

"A Year Out of Life," Mary E. Waller, D. Appleton & Co.

"Roads of Destiny," O. Henry, Doubleday, Page & Co.

"Dragon's Blood," Henry M. Rideout, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

"The Lodger Overhead," Charles Belmont Davis, Charles Scribner's Sons.

"Old Friends," William Winter, Moffat, Yard & Co.

"The Girl and the Bill," Bannister Merwin, Dodd, Mead & Co.

"Fame's Pathway," H. C. Chatfield-Taylor, Duffield & Co.

"Sebastian," Frank Danby, Macmillan Co.

"Partners Three," Victor Mapes, F. A. Stokes Co.

"The Gun Runner," Arthur Stringer, B. W. Dodge & Co.

"The Chippendales," Robert Grant, Charles Scribner's Sons.

"The Plotting of Frances Ware," James Locke, Moffat, Yard & Co.

"In a Mysterious Way," Anne Warner, Little, Brown & Co.

"Mr. Opp," Alice Hegan Rice, Century Co.

THE HAMLET BY THE SEA

THERE is a little seaport town,
Whence long ago a fleet of ships
Sped, white and gay, beyond where dips
The dim horizon down and down.

Old men sit on the pier and gaze,
With pipe in mouth and dull surmise,
And whisper 'thwart their blear-eyed haze:
"Say! don't you see the sails uprise?"

Mothers that maids were, also, wait
To greet the vessels' glad return.
Yet vainly shall they watch and yearn;
No tide brings ships, or tells their fate.

Yet does the little port keep bright,
Having an atmosphere of pride
That such fair craft from it took flight,
The cliff-o'ertopping waves to ride.

My heart, you are the little place
Close by the sea; your hopes, the fleet
That sailed forth to your buoyant beat,
Homeward its course no more to trace.

Sometimes you fret, then grow content
To dream of those enchanted things,
Which to the gray, drear past have lent
The spotless splendor of their wings!

WILLIAM STRUTHERS.

Paradoxes of the Piano

By F. C. Taylor

SCARCELY any home is without one, and scarcely any one knows anything about them. Probably fifty per cent. of the educated people in America—certainly seventy-five per cent. of the educated women—have made some attempt to play the piano; and yet a really good piano player is the rarest of all birds musical, so rare that Rubinstein and Liszt have won immortality as performers, and to-day Mr. Paderewski is a greater attraction than a whole symphony orchestra.

Apparently there is no instrument so easy to manipulate; really there is none so boundless in the possibilities of technique it affords to the artist. It lends itself so readily to the cheaper delights of ragtime; yet at the same time it is capable of the chastest, most purely intellectual appeal in the whole domain of music.

All pianos look more or less alike; all are obviously complicated, built, to a certain extent, on the same pattern, apparently the work of machinery rather than of the human hand; yet there is no fabric that a human being can devise—not even a racing yacht—in the construction of which craftsmanship and the loving, conscientious care of the artist workman counts for so much.

Mechanical device and the ingenious machine have excelled and driven out the craftsman in many lines of human endeavor. To the unprejudiced mind, there can be no doubt whatever that chairs and tallboys and davenports can be manufactured by steam and electricity at Grand Rapids, Michigan, as excellent in design and solid in construction as the finest conceptions of Chippendale and Sheraton. There are factories in Brockton, Massachusetts, that can make shoes more quickly, better and cheaper than any individual cobbler that ever lived, not even excepting the redoubtable and tuneful Hans Sachs himself. But when we come to the piano we come face to face with the eternal paradox that seems to lie at the base of all things. With the piano, it is different.

A good piano cannot be made without loving care and craftsmanship of the highest order. The personality of a machine may be expressed in a good pair of shoes or a worthy dining table; but the piano, if it is to be a musical instrument at all, must express the personality of a man, who in order to make a good piano must be somewhat of a genius, and must have, besides, that infinite capacity for taking pains which, assurances to the contrary notwithstanding, does not seem to be ever present, even among the geniuses.

And, crowning paradox of all, the greatest master of his art—for it was an art with him, and has been ever since with his successors—laid the foundations for his knowledge of the instrument and how it should be made, in a little New England village, during that period in the earlier half of the last century when America was anything but a musical centre.

Jonas Chickering was the son of a blacksmith, and therefore knew the value and goodness of strength. He was apprenticed to a cabinet maker at a time when cabinet making was still an art, and so he knew the worth of

loving and conscientious craftsmanship. He was a born musician. The fact that he was president of the Handel and Haydn Society in Boston, and sang the leading rôle there in Neukomm's great oratorio, "David," is sufficient testimony in this regard. Having these three gifts and something more besides, he became a great piano builder, and the founder of an organization which has not only grown and developed in art and the capacity for fine workmanship, but has adhered solidly and unflinchingly to his ideals and proved their worth even in an age of commercialism.

The fact that at the first World's Fair ever held—the famous exposition at the Crystal Palace in London—the Chickering Piano won the grand prize; that since then it has won one hundred and twenty-nine grand prizes and a Cross of the Legion of Honor presented by Napoleon III; the fact that Liszt, probably as good a critic of piano music and piano makers as has ever lived, pronounced the Chickering piano "superlatively perfect"—these things are due, perhaps, in some measure to modern inventive ingenuity and mechanical skill. Far more, however, are they due to the personal care, the skill, time and conscientiousness that go to the making of a Chickering piano.

It was Liszt who made it possible to convey, through the medium of the piano, the breadth and atmosphere of the great Wagnerian orchestra—even the love and passion of "Tristan and Isolde." It was Liszt who immortalized and gave permanent form to a national folk music, in a series of piano compositions. It was Liszt who saw at once in the Chickering those qualities which every piano artist dreams of in connection with the ideal instrument. They are not qualities that can be obtained by perfunctory work; they cannot be found in pianos that are made hastily.

The first piano which Jonas Chickering ever saw was one that once belonged to Princess Amelia, daughter of George III. This instrument, after many vicissitudes, turned up in a farmhouse at New Ipswich, New Hampshire. It was out of tune—as a matter of fact, it was generally out of tune. European piano makers, even at a much later period than that, had a predilection for making frames of wood, unsheathed with metal, and for trusting to damp weather to swell the wood sufficiently to hold the pegs in place. There are still pianos here and there in America, excellent in other respects—the best work of the best European manufacturers, and very costly indeed—which simply *will not* stay in tune, because of this habit. To-day, in the Chickering factory, they are stringing piano wires to frames proof against a pressure of fifty thousand pounds, by a system that holds the instrument in tune under any usage.

Chickering had never seen a piano before he made the acquaintance of the one at New Ipswich. He took this one apart, studied the parts, put it together again, and put it in tune—so far as such a feat was humanly possible. Then, being a natural musician, he played upon it all the ballads which he inherited from an English ancestry—all the church music which a Puritan civilization permitted. He began to see that there were some tremendous possibilities in the piano.

It was not this piano in itself which so appealed to him. The instrument had a rather jangling tone; as has been said, it went out of tune with appalling regularity; the action left much to be desired. Had it been placed on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House, it might have been possible, without smashing the keyboard, to make it tinklingly audible as far back in the auditorium as the tenth or fifteenth row of orchestra stalls.

It *was* a piano, however, and it suggested something to the imagination; it stimulated Chickering—this was in 1818, when Jonas Chickering was twenty years old—into his conception of what a piano might be. We owe something to the musical tastes of the Princess Amelia; for her piano, in an intellectual sense, became the ancestor of the finest modern piano—the best piano that the piano builder of to-day can turn out—the Chickering.

Chickering forsook the cabinet maker, bade farewell to the sparks and roaring bellows of his father's blacksmith shop, and went to Boston. He wanted to find some one who knew something about how pianos should be made—already he himself had some ideas on the subject—and Boston was the likeliest place. He went by stage coach and schooner, and finally discovered that at that particular time Boston was not especially notable as a piano centre. He had thought that it should be easy to build a piano better than the one he had left in the farmhouse back in New Ipswich, but he found that few of the Boston pianofortes were much better.

He began to work on some of his own ideas. Princess Amelia's piano had a jangling tone, partially due to the fact that the buffing was worn from the hammers. Chickering did not think that the material was right, anyway. He tried to secure better material, and his successors in the Chickering piano business have been working on the same lines since then. Today, the felt used in covering the hammers of the Chickering piano is a specially prepared fabric, worth a trifle more than its weight in silver.

He built his first piano, and sold it to Miss Thankful C. Hutchinson. This was in 1823. Since then Miss Thankful, who we hope *was* thankful for a good instrument, as the times went, has passed away; but the piano is still alive.

It had a better sounding-board than the piano he had tuned or tried to tune back at New Ipswich. That was another idea of Chickering, on which his descendants have been working ever since. Now they make the sounding-boards of Adirondack spruce, and they are the best in the world. They tune and retune and test a piano for a full year before the sounding-board and strings and hammers have been educated into a perfect purity and reliability of tone.

Choosing a piano is a difficult science; even when one possesses a musical education, the tone quality is hard to judge. In the human voice, in the violin, tone color is so pronounced and obvious that even those with the least musical ability can distinguish good from bad. But with the piano, which furnishes the most purely intellectual of all music, the gradations and qualities that distinguish good from bad are less palpable and less easily distinguished. A piano is something like a man or a woman—you must live with one for a while to get to know it.

Permanency of tone quality and color is another thing that can only be secured in a piano made as the Chickering piano is made. A hurriedly built piano may sound well enough in the warehouse, particularly if the purchaser is seeking a piano of not too brilliant tone, for use in a rather small apartment. But when it has been used for a little while, the veiled, smooth tone changes into a jarring parody of a brilliant color, and passes from that into stridency and jangle. In the Chickering you can get any kind of tone except a bad tone; and you can rest assured that it will remain the same, no matter how many children practice on it.

The same thing applies to the action. If the action suits you when you first try it, it will always suit you; for it will not change, stiffen or loosen. The Chickering piano is too well made for that.

The modern pianoforte is such a highly complex instrument that a book might be written on the subject without half exhausting it. Some of the interesting things about the piano can be found in a booklet, well worth reading, which any one can secure by writing to Chickering & Sons, 841 Tremont Street, Boston.

Whether you ever think of buying a piano or not, it is worth while learning something about them. They are the newest of all great musical instruments, and the most difficult to construct properly. The Chickering up to date is the last word in piano building. It is so accepted all over the world; and, in its own way, it is, merely as a piece of mechanism, as ingenious and interesting as are the engines of an ocean liner.

AS OTHERS SEE US.

AINSLEE'S MAGAZINE is particularly refreshing, containing, as it does, so many stories so different from the accustomed and familiar lines of fiction.—*Springfield (Mass.) Union.*

AINSLEE'S MAGAZINE shows that its publishers continue to be alive to their opportunities, for there is no falling off from the high standards which they have set and have pursued so successfully.—*Scranton Republican.*

AINSLEE'S is an extraordinary magazine, because every one of its stories has a flavor of freshness and originality that takes them all out of the familiar and beaten paths which have become so monotonous. And at the same time they are filled with a realism that makes them intensely interesting.—*Nashville American.*

As all readers of AINSLEE'S know, the primary distinction of the magazine is its quality of entertainment. Its purpose, above all things, is to give to the reading public diversion and recreation in the hours of relaxation from the hard facts of life. Interest in the infinite variety of the manifestations of human life and experience, on its emotional side especially, is unfailing.—*Fort Worth Telegram.*

AINSLEE'S has another story of a type which it originated and has made popular. It is one of the child stories for grown-ups, a kind that women readers especially have found so alluring. The one in this number is by Mary Heaton Vorse, and is called "The Cynicism of Jimmy Preston." It is among the best of its type.—*Seattle Times.*

AINSLEE'S for February has another star number, in which there is an extraordinary combination of stories of the widest variety of plot and theme. The complete novel, an unusually long one, keeps the absorbed attention of the reader by virtue of its great dramatic power.— *Washington Tribune.*

AINSLEE'S has a list of contributors capable of making any magazine distinguished.—*Wilkesbarre Record.*

AINSLEE'S comes to its readers filled with the means of diversion and entertainment, which will go a long way toward making life brighter and happier. It will be enough to induce thousands of people to buy it if they are told that this number contains a new story by Joseph C. Lincoln.—*Bridgeport Post.*

AINSLEE'S has some remarkably interesting features, which make it the most prominent among current magazines.—*Charlotte Chronicle.*

AINSLEE'S for July has the right quality and variety of fiction which have come to be distinctive of this magazine.—*Manchester Union.*

AINSLEE'S for June embodies all that its publishers claim for it in the matter of human interest and variety.—*Joliet Republican.*

It would be hard to find a better selected group of entertaining writers than those who have been chosen to contribute to AINSLEE'S.—*Bookseller, Newsdealer, and Stationer.*

AINSLEE'S for February has its usual quota of excellent fiction; indeed, if anything, this number exceeds the high standard with which the magazine began the New Year.—*Paterson News.*

AINSLEE'S has a table of contents that is remarkable for its variety. Its fiction is not of the kind that comes all from the same mold; it is of the best literary quality, and will suit every degree of taste.—*Salt Lake City News.*

AINSLEE'S for August contains an array of seasonable stories which, taken together, embodies about the best that can be found in any of the magazines in the line of midsummer fiction.—*Worcester Gazette.*

There are several particular reasons why AINSLEE'S MAGAZINE will be widely purchased by the autumnal lovers of this class of reading. To have a great variety of subjects and not seem to strain for it is really characteristic of AINSLEE'S.—*Boston Globe.*



The College Boy

Keeps his Nerves steady for sport—
His Brain clear for study—on

POSTUM

"There's a Reason"

Let a change from coffee to Postum tell it's own tale of better feelings.

Postum Cereal Co., Ltd., Battle Creek, Mich., U. S. A.

Fruit Basket
Made with
NABISCO
SUGAR WAFERS



With luncheon or dinner
With a sherbet or ice,
With beverage or fruit
Or served alone

NABISCO

SUGAR WAFERS.

add the final and crowning touch
to afternoon tea or formal banquet.

RECIPE

Arrange NABISCO Sugar Wafers on a pretty dish to resemble a fruit basket. Fill the center with strawberries (or any seasonable fruit), piling them high. Serve the NABISCO Sugar Wafers and berries with sugar and cream, or as fancy may dictate.

In ten cent tins.
Also in twenty-five cent tins.



Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



THERE is a Cake-Baking Secret known to good cooks that should interest every housewife.

¶ It's the use of Kingsford's Corn Starch—not only in the *filling*, but in the *cake itself*—one part Corn Starch to three parts flour. It makes the daintiest smooth, light cake imaginable.

KINGSFORD'S CORN STARCH

is absolutely necessary for the best Angel Cake, White Mountain and other *white cakes*. Use one-half cup corn starch mixed with the flour. ¶ KINGSFORD'S has a hundred uses. The good cook reaches for the familiar yellow package a dozen times a day. It's on her grocery list *every week*.

¶ *A Word to Kingsford Friends*—Send us the name of any young housewife who thinks that Corn Starch is used only for puddings or desserts; we will send her our new little Book (*E*), "What a Cook Ought to Know About Corn Starch." We will gladly mail you without cost a copy too if you like.

T. KINGSFORD & SON, OSWEGO, N. Y.
NATIONAL STARCH CO., Successors

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

"Onyx"  *Hosiery*

Extract from speech delivered in Congress, April 6, 1909, by

Hon. Sereno E. Payne

Chairman Ways and Means Committee

"LORD & TAYLOR are the largest Importers of Hosiery in this country. These people buy in the regular way and do not knowingly handle any merchandise made by the smaller manufacturers, preferring the merchandise made in the large establishments, where better regularity of manufacture is maintained, thus handling the somewhat expert grade of merchandise."

This official statement of facts should cause the consumer to demand the "*Onyx*" Brand. For Men, Women and Children. From 25c. to the highest grade made. May be had from most first-class shops in every part of the United States. Accept no substitute.

If your dealer cannot supply you, write to Dept. Z, and we will direct you where to procure *"Onyx" Hosiery.*

Lord & Taylor *New York*

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



This Cub

Has a mother who knows how to keep a boy busy, and the whole family can enjoy breakfast with.

Post Toasties

Crisp, Nourishing, Golden-brown Bits, ready to eat from the package, or with cream and sugar. Saves mother's time, and delights the childish appetite—

"The Taste Lingers"

Made at the Pure Food Factories of

Postum Cereal Company, Ltd., Battle Creek, Mich., U. S. A.

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



Come Into the Light

There are some few foods which must be factory cooked, because every home lacks the facilities. Crackers and beans are among them.

Home-baked beans ferment and form gas, because they don't digest. Most of them fail to get half enough heat.

They are mushy and broken, while all people like beans nutty, mealy and whole. It isn't your fault; it's your lack of facilities.

We employ steam ovens, so we apply 245 degrees heat without bursting or crisping a bean.

We bake in small parcels so the full heat goes through. Thus Van Camp's don't ferment and form gas.

We bake the tomato sauce into the beans and get our delicious blend.

Beans are 84% nutriment. They contain more food than the choicest beef, yet they cost not a third as much.

They are appetizing, hearty and economical. And our beans are ready to serve.

Don't you think it worth while to serve a can of Van Camp's, and learn what they mean to you?

Van Camp's BAKED WITH TOMATO SAUCE

PORK AND BEANS

Don't judge Van Camp's by other baked beans. We pay $2.25 per bushel to get the whitest and plumpest of Michigan beans. Some beans sell for 30 cents.

We use whole, vine-ripened tomatoes to make a sauce that costs five times as much as some others.

Don't expect cheap beans, poor sauce and wrong methods to make such a dish as we make. Insist on the genuine.

Three sizes: 10, 15 and 20 cents per can.

Van Camp Packing Company, Indianapolis, Ind.

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

An All-Around Stove



Your kitchen may be well planned—everything apparently handy—yet if there is not a New Perfection Wick Blue Flame Oil Cook-Stove in it, the one greatest convenience of all is lacking.

The "New Perfection" is a home and family stove—big enough and powerful enough to do all you'd ever ask a cooking-stove to do, and, best of all, it does its work without overheating the kitchen. The

NEW PERFECTION
Wick Blue Flame Oil Cook-Stove

is built with a CABINET TOP just like a modern range. It is the most convenient stove ever made and is almost indispensable to summer comfort.

Three sizes. Can be had either with or without Cabinet Top. If not with your dealer, write our nearest agency.



The **Rayo LAMP** is the most perfect all-round home light. Has large font, best and latest center draft burner and beautiful porcelain shade. Nothing complicated about the Rayo—easily cleaned, easily managed. If not with your dealer, write our nearest agency.

STANDARD OIL COMPANY
(Incorporated)

Don't Be Misled!

No instrument is the original 88-NOTE player piano unless it bears the name "Melville Clark APOLLO Player Piano" on the fall board.

This is the *first* player piano with the full range of the piano keyboard, 88 notes—the first player piano to play all music exactly as written.

This is the *only* player piano that represents eight years of perfection.



APOLLO PLAYER, Style L

Hear the APOLLO—Mark the Difference

The 88-Note Apollo Player Piano

positively plays the full range of keyboard, 7⅓ octaves—faithfully preserving all the original virility and symmetry of the music. The Melville Clark Piano Co., was **THE FIRST TO MAKE AND TO MARKET AN 88-NOTE PLAYER PIANO.** It is therefore the leader in the industry.

Human Touch Given by APOLLO Downward Stroke

The keys of the APOLLO are struck by the pneumatic fingers just as the HUMAN FINGERS strike them—*downward and in front.*

It is this down stroke that gives the APOLLO its famous human touch. It is the human touch that secures the real human expression. It plays with the delicate shadings of the greatest pianists.

You can swell a chromatic run on the 88-note **APOLLO** exactly as with the hand.

The **APOLLO** spring motor automatically rewinds the music on the roll and thus saves you work.

Transpose to Five or More Different Keys

By a touch with the finger tip you can change to five or more keys, to suit any voice or accompanying instrument, by the **APOLLO** Transposing Mouthpiece.

When the music roll shrinks or swells, the notes do not pass over the corresponding openings in the mouthpiece, through which the player breathes. Sometimes the notes miss the openings entirely. The pneumatic finger gets little or no power and strikes the key faintly or not at all.

In the **APOLLO** you have only to touch the shift screw of the Transposing Mouthpiece to move it to right or left and thus bring the opening under the notes.

There are many other exclusive points in the APOLLO. Its case designs are all beautiful. Send for illustrated catalogs, in which all these details are graphically set forth. Remember, the Melville Clark APOLLO is the original 88-note player!

Melville Clark Piano Co., 404 Steinway Bldg., Chicago

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



Rebuild Your Overworked Physique into Sturdy Strength and Vigor

How often do you come home at night too dogged tired to even respond to the pleasant reception awaiting you? Life's struggle becomes more and more intense as the twentieth century progresses. Mentally and physically you must conserve your energies, build up your strength and equip yourself for the test. You must have sleep, good digestion, steady nerves, bone and muscle, clear mind. These can be secured, maintained and enhanced by the use of

Pabst Extract

The "Best" Tonic

Being an extract of rich barley malt and choicest hops, it furnishes nourishment in predigested form and acts as a tonic. A desire for food is stimulated and power furnished the system to draw quicker, better and greater energy from what you eat. At the same time the gentle, soothing effects of the hops restore your nerves to their normal state. Peaceful and refreshing sleep is induced, the brain strengthened and new life given to the tired muscles.

Physicians of repute everywhere are constantly vouching for the merits of Pabst Extract, The "Best" Tonic, by recommending it to strengthen the weak and build up the overworked; to relieve insomnia and conquer dyspepsia; to help the anaemic and aid the nervous; to assist nursing mothers and invigorate old age.

Order a Dozen from Your Local Druggist Today **Insist Upon It Being Pabst**

A Library Slip, good for Books and Magazines, is packed with each bottle.

Booklet and Picture "Baby's First Adventure" sent free on request.

PABST EXTRACT CO. **DEPT. 29** **MILWAUKEE, WIS.**

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

THE Velvet Grip

CUSHION RUBBER BUTTON

THE BUTTONS ARE MOULDED FROM BEST GRADE RUBBER

PAT. 12.13.92 & 12.31.95

HOSE SUPPORTERS

WORN ALL OVER THE WORLD

DURABLE STYLISH COMFORTABLE

WEBS FRESH FROM THE LOOMS

METAL PARTS HEAVY NICKEL PLATE

THIS GUARANTY COUPON-In Yellow

IS ATTACHED THIS WAY TO EVERY PAIR OF THE GENUINE — BE SURE IT'S THERE.

Sample Pair, Mercerized 25c., Silk 50c. Mailed on receipt of price

GEORGE FROST COMPANY, Makers

BOSTON

WEAR LONGER THAN OTHERS

GUARANTY COUPON. VELVET GRIP

THE Velvet Grip Cushion Button

HOSE SUPPORTER

IS GUARANTEED TO DEALER AND USER AGAINST IMPERFECTIONS

THE BUTTONS AND LOOPS ARE LICENSED FOR USE ON THIS HOSE SUPPORTER ONLY.

To Your Measure for $15



I'd like to be your tailor, and tailor a suit like this, to your measure, for $15.00. Most tailors would ask $30.00. I guarantee correct style, fit and workmanship in my suits at $12.50 to $25.00.

TAILORED FOR YOU

I am a *custom tailor*, and by selling direct to you, I save you all middlemen's profits. I tell you how to take measurements, and guarantee perfect fit. Ten years of tailoring in same location — thousands of satisfied customers—I'll please you or send back your money.

I pay express

PORTFOLIO FREE

New portfolio just out, with style sheets and cloth samples for Spring and Summer, 1909. I want to send this book to you without charge.

I'm King, Tailor to the Kings of America—*the well dressed young men.* Who are you?

Send for the free portfolio now

KING TAILORING COMPANY

195-199 West Water Street -:- Milwaukee, Wisconsin

PIONEER

SUSPENDERS

Distinctive in artistic webs woven of fresh rubber and finest lisle thread, original colorings, rustless firegilt metal parts, calfskin ends that will not pull out, silk sewing that will never rip. At your dealers, 50c, or sent direct from the factory guaranteed against all defects. Look for PIONEER on the back of the buckle.

Brighton GARTER 25¢

The flattest clasp, the surest grip, the stretchiest SILK web, ever known in Men's Garters. All colors and fancy effects. At your dealers, or sent direct for 25 cts.

EVERY PAIR UNCONDITIONALLY GUARANTEED.

PIONEER SUSPENDER CO.

718 Market Street, Philadelphia

Makers of PIONEER Belts

Send for our free Boat Book

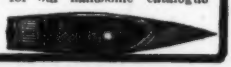
Do not think of buying a launch until you see our

Four Launch Bargains



Only $121 for this complete 16 foot launch. 2½ H.P. guaranteed, self-starting engine. $144 for 9½ mile per hour "Speedaway." $158 for canopy topped "Winner." $160 for Auto-topped 3 H. P. "Comfort." Special bargains in 18 ft., 22 ft. and 25 ft. launches. Engine result of 30 years experience. Weedless wheel and rudder. Shipped immediately. Your money back if not as represented. Send postal for our handsome catalogue today—it's a gem.

C. T. WRIGHT ENGINE CO.
106 Canal St.
Greenville, Mich.



Rowboat $20.00

20 different Designs

Can ship immediately in any quantity. Need No Boathouse. Never Leak, Rust, Check, Crack or Rot. Every boat has water tight compartment, so cannot sink. Write for FREE Illustrated Catalog and Special Prices.

MICHIGAN STEEL BOAT CO. 172 Bellevue Ave., Detroit, Mich



Designed by the World's Greatest Naval Architects

Our new models designed by Whittelsey & Whittaker of New York, embody the most advanced ideas in launch and motor boat designing.

The New Mullins 1909 Models

are trim, fast, safe and seaworthy. Built of steel like torpedo boats and fitted with large air chambers, like life boats. They are speedy and absolutely safe. Many new improvements—Concealed Machinery—One Man Control—Mullins Silent Underwater Exhaust, etc. We want you to know the full specifications of these new models and their low cost. When you want your boat you will want it at once, so *write today for our catalog.*

W. H. MULLINS COMPANY, 325 Franklin Street, SALEM, OHIO.

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



If Hard Times Came Again
Would *YOURS* be the Empty Peg?

Where would YOU be if the pay-roll had to be cut down? Would you be one of the first to go because of your lack of training, or would your ability as an expert ensure safety?

IF you have the *special* knowledge such as the International Correspondence Schools of Scranton can impart to you, you need *never* fear for your position. The "laid-off" bugaboo will never scare you. On the contrary, an I. C. S. training will bring you steady advancement—will put and *keep* you far above the "failure" line. The vision of the empty peg will never be yours.

ANOTHER advantage of I. C. S. training is that it qualifies you for a good position at *the particular line of work you like best.* You don't have to leave home. You don't have to give up your present position. You do not even have to buy a single book. The I. C. S. *goes to you*—wherever you live or whatever you do. Helps you in your spare time. The attached coupon will bring you full information regarding the I. C. S. method. Mark and mail the coupon *now.* A two cent stamp is all it costs you to do this. There is no obligation whatever attached to it.

THOUSANDS of poorly paid but ambitious men have won success through I. C. S. advice and help. Many of these could only read and write when they enrolled. On an average, 300 students every month ***VOLUNTARILY*** report advancement gained wholly through I. C. S. help. During March the number was **335.**

THIS is proof positive that the I. C. S. can help you, provided you are ambitious. Mark the coupon. Besides putting you to no expense and under no obligation, marking the coupon entitles you to six months' free subscription to the I. C. S. illustrated monthly "Ambition."

If Hard Times Came Again Would YOURS be the Empty Peg?

The Business of This Place is to RAISE SALARIES

SALARY-RAISING COUPON

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS
Box 1199, Scranton, Pa.

Please send me, absolutely free, "Ambition" Magazine for six months, and also explain, without further obligation on my part how I can qualify for employment or advancement in the position before which I have marked X

Bookkeeper	Mechan. Draughtsman
Stenographer	Telephone Engineer
Advertisement Writer	Elec. Lighting Supt.
Show Card Writer	Mech. Engineer
Window Trimmer	Plumber & Steam Fitter
Commercial Law	Stationary Engineer
Illustrator	Civil Engineer
Civil Service	Building Contractor
Chemist	Architect's Draughtsman
Textile Mill Supt.	Architect
Electrician	Structural Engineer
Elec. Engineer	Banking
	Mining Engineer

Name _____

Street and No. _____

City _____ State _____

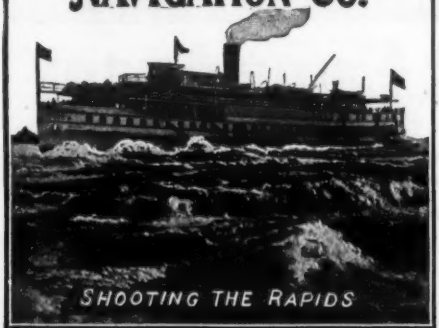
Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

White Rock

"The World's Best Table Water"

Now ready, 1909 edition of the famous "Richard's Poor Almanack," the hit of 1908. Beautifully bound and illustrated humorous book. Sent for 10c. Address White Rock, Flatiron Bldg., New York City.

RICHELIEU & ONTARIO NAVIGATION CO.



SHOOTING THE RAPIDS

NIAGARA TO THE SEA

Through the Venetian Scenery of the Thousand Islands, the exciting descent of all the marvelous Rapids and the historic Associations of Old Quebec (America's Gibraltar) thence to the incomparable Saguenay River, with its majestic Capes, "Trinity" and "Eternity."

Send 6c. postage for illustrated guide.

THOS. HENRY, Traffic Manager Dept. "W" Montreal, Can.

Chalfonte

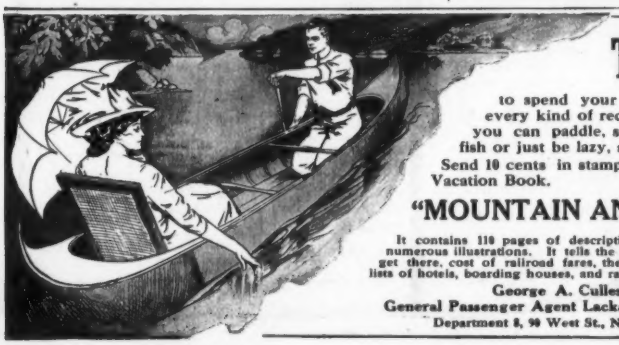
The Boardwalk, the beach, the piers and other attractions, when combined with the comfort and elegance of Chalfonte make a visit to

Atlantic City

at this time most delightful. Write for reservations to THE LEEDS COMPANY

Always Open

On the Beach



The Best Place

to spend your vacation is the place that offers every kind of recreation and sport—a place where you can paddle, sail, swim, motor, ride, golf, hunt, fish or just be lazy, as the mood strikes you.

Send 10 cents in stamps for the *NEW* 1909 Lackawanna Vacation Book.

"MOUNTAIN AND LAKE RESORTS"

It contains 110 pages of description and information with numerous illustrations. It tells the best place to go, how to get there, cost of railroad fares, the best place to stay, with lists of hotels, boarding houses, and rates, etc. Address

George A. Cullen,
General Passenger Agent Lackawanna Railroad
Department 8, 90 West St., New York City.

Lackawanna Railroad

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

"Blue Label" Ketchup

Pure and Unadulterated Containing Only Those Substances Recognized and Endorsed by the U. S. Government.

ALWAYS during our business experience of over forty years, our aim has been QUALITY and our product is recognized as the BEST and PUREST of its kind. Using, as we do, only the most perfect raw materials—Red-Ripe Tomatoes fresh from the fields in perfect condition for our use—never the left-overs from market stalls (skins, seeds and cores being removed) cooked ever so lightly that the natural flavor may be retained; combined with skilfully blended pure spices—all handled by experienced chefs in a scientific way in sanitary kitchens, enable us to produce the Ketchup—"BLUE LABEL"—that is now, and has been for twenty years, recognized as the standard of quality and excellence.



The same statement is also true regarding our Canned Fruits, Vegetables, Meats, Soups, Plum Puddings, Preserves, Jams, Jellies, etc.

Owing to the acknowledged purity and high quality of our products, and our honest labels no change whatever in either goods or labels has been required or made because of the enactment of the National Food Law.

Ask for and see that you get food products bearing our name. Always the guarantee of purity and wholesomeness.

DO NOT ACCEPT SUBSTITUTES.

Write today for our booklet, "Original Menus," telling what to have for breakfast, luncheon or dinner.

Our kitchens, in fact all portions of our factory, are always open and visitors are made welcome.

CURTICE BROTHERS CO., Rochester, N. Y.

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING SECTION

Rate, $2.25 a line, which includes SMITH'S and POPULAR Magazines, making a total of 4,000,000 readers—the cheapest and best Classified Advertising medium on the market. Next issue of AINSLEE'S closes June 1st.

Agents & Help Wanted

AGENTS—three out of every four women buy our Dress Goods and embroideries on sight. Big profits, write to-day for Free catalogue and samples. Joseph T. Simon & Co., Dept. G, 656 Broadway, New York.

LADY SEWERS wanted to make up shields at home; $10 per 100; can make two an hour; work sent prepaid to reliable women. Send reply envelope for information to Universal Co., Desk S, Philadelphia, Pa.

BE YOUR OWN BOSS:—Start Mail Order business at home; devote whole or spare time. We tell you how. Very good profit. Everything furnished. No Catalog outfit proposition. Write at once for our "Starter" and free particulars. Address, N. S. Krueger Co., 155 Washington St., Chicago, Ill.

YOU can earn $200.00 per month operating and selling The "Wonder Photo Cannon." Everybody wants to wear a photo button; they sell for 10c each—cost 2c; no experience necessary. Complete outfit $25.00. The Chicago Ferrotype Co. Room 113, Ferrotype Bldg., Corner Laflin & Congress Sts. Chicago, Ill.

ELECTRIC GOODS. Big Cat 3 cts. Undersell all. Fortune for agents. Battery Lamps, lanterns, motors, fans. Ohio Electric Works, Cleveland, O.

IN SIX MONTHS A BOY MADE $1000 selling our great Soap and Toilet combinations. Become a Davis agent and make $200 a month. Davis Soap Co., 19 Union Park, Ct. Chicago.

AGENTS—$300 every month selling our wonderful 7-piece Kitchen Set. Send for sworn statement of $12 daily profit. Outfit free. Thomas Mfg. Co., 313 Home Bldg., Dayton, O.

CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES are paid well for easy work; examinations of all kinds soon. Expert advice, sample questions and Booklet 22 describing questions and telling easiest and quickest way to secure them free. Write now. Washington Civil Service School, Washington, D.C.

LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE wanted—Splendid income assured right man to act as our representative after learning our business thoroughly by mail. Former experience unnecessary. All we require is honesty, ability, ambition and willingness to learn a lucrative business. No soliciting or traveling. This is an exceptional opportunity for a man in your section to get into a big paying business without capital and become independent for life. Write at once for full particulars. E. R. Marden, Pres., The Nat'l. Co-Op. Real Estate Co., Suite 339, Marden Bldg., Washington, D. C.

Agents and Help Wanted—Continued.

OUR SWISS EMBROIDERED SHIRTWAIST PATTERNS sell at sight. 15 dollars daily made. Write today for catalog. U.S. Embroidery Mfg Co., Dept. 7C, 96 East Broadway, N. Y.

WANTED—Railway Mail Clerks, City Carriers, Postoffice Clerks, $1000 yearly. Many examinations coming. Preparation free. Write for schedule. Franklin Institute, Dept. F3, Rochester, N. Y.

AGENTS. Portraits 35c, Frames 15c, sheet pictures 1c, stereoscopes 25c, views 1c. 30 days credit. Samples & Catalog Free. Consolidated Portrait Co., 290-164 W. Adams St., Chicago.

IF you have some spare time, we will pay you a salary of 15c an hour; also extra commission. More than a million people use our goods. We want men and women everywhere to look after this business for us. Experience unnecessary. Send for particulars and free certificate to McLean, Black & Co., Inc., 13 Beverly St., Boston, Mass.

JUST Patented, Young's Button Hole Gauge Knife. Nothing like it. Every woman wants one. One agent sold 107 at 25c. each in one day, made $13.37. 15 other useful rapid sellers. A. M. Young & Co., 43 Young's Bldg., Chicago.

AGENTS, Male or Female, can make all kinds of money selling my Pongee Swiss Embroidered Waist Patterns and Silk Shawls. Big money for you. Catalogue mailed on request. Joseph Gluck, Dept. "A" 621 B'way, N.Y.City

SALESMEN:—Side line or entire time, handling "Stovink" and other guaranteed stove preparations. Pocket samples. Easy sellers. Hayden, Griffin & Co., 323 Huron St., Toledo, O.

WE WANT A LADY in your locality to act as special representative. If you can furnish us with satisfactory references, we will show you how you can earn from $3 to $5 per day according to your spare time, without investing one penny. We do not offer you worthless premiums, but actually start you in a well-paying business. Please do not respond unless you can furnish reliable references. Pilgrim Manufacturing Co., Dept. 33, 35 West 21st St., New York.

AGENTS WANTED in every county to sell the Transparent Handle Pocket Knife. Big commission paid. From $75 to $300 a month can be made. Write for terms. Novelty Cutlery Co., No. 13 Bar St., Canton, Ohio.

LADY AGENTS in every town to sell our goods on easy payment plan—factory direct to consumer. Splendid money making proposition for all or part of your time. Write for full particulars. Hascall Smith Co., 623-625 West 34th Street, New York City.

Agents and Help Wanted—Continued.

AGENTS to sell Ladies Novelt. Embroid. Waist Patt. Kimonos, Silk Shawls, Scarfs, Mexican Drawn Work, Battenberg, Cluny, Russian Laces. Europ. & Orient Novelt. Ask for Cat. S. Bonan, Dep. D. 143 Liberty St. N.Y.C.

WE offer excellent terms and exclusive territory to men capable of representing us. The Sun Typewriter at $40 is the standard of its field. Sun Typewriter Co., 317 B'way, New York.

BIG MONEY easily made fitting eyeglasses. Write today for free "Booklet 58." Tells how. Easy to learn. Best and easiest money-making business. National Optical College, St. Louis.

AGENTS—$75 Monthly, metal Combination Rolling Pin, 9 articles combined; lightning seller; sample free. Forshee Mfg. Co., box 213, Dayton, O.

AGENTS to sell Household Remedies (Tablets) Dyspepsia, Cholera, Headache, Corn Cure new idea. Samples 15 cts. Happy Thought Co., Sta. J, N.Y.

Business Opportunities

BUSINESS BOOK FREE: TELLS How You Can Secure the actual daily working plans, the money-making systems and short cuts of 112 Great, Big, Business Men, to increase your salary—to boost your profits. System, Dept. 25-4 151-153 Wabash Ave., Chicago.

MY BOOK, "BUILDING A BUSINESS," tells how big mail order agency business can be started with small capital, how to conduct the business and make several thousand dollars annually. Robert Hicks, St. Louis, Mo.

$3000 TO $10,000 YEARLY easily made in real estate business; no capital required; we teach the business by mail, appoint you special representative, assist you to success. Valuable book free. The Cross Co., 2774 Reaper Block, Chicago. See our other advertisement in this magazine.

6% GOLD Coupon Guaranteed Bonds for sale. Good as Govt. Bonds. Write for particulars. John W. Savage, 1433 Linden St., Allentown, Pa.

For Women

WRITE for our special plan telling Women how to earn weekly from $25 upwards in most agreeable occupation. Demand far exceeds supply. Marinello Company, Dept. B, Chicago.

YALE PERFUME TABLET made from crushed flowers, send 10c. for full size Tablet. Yale Supply Co., Dept. A, 308 West 36th St., New York.

Musical Instruments

WING PIANOS, BEST TONED AND MOST SUCCESSFUL—Est'd 40 years. Recent improvements give greatest resonance. Sold direct. No agents. Sent on trial—freight paid; first, last and all the time by us—to show our faith in our work. If you want a good piano, you save $75—$200. Very easy terms. Slightly used "high-grades," 1 Steinway, 3 Chickerings, etc., $75 up, taken in exchange for improved Wing pianos—thoroughly refinished. Send for bargain list. You should have anyway—"Book of Complete Information About Pianos." 152 pages. N. Y. World says: "A book of educational interest everyone should have." Free for the asking from the old house of Wing & Son, 353-365 W. 13th St., New York.

GENUINE Bargains in High-Grade Upright Pianos Slightly used instruments: 8 Steinways from $350 up; 6 Lyon & Healys from $250 up; 9 Washburns from $200 up; 7 Knabes from $250 up; 3 Chickerings from $250 up; also ordinary second-hand Uprights $75 up; also 6 very fine Parlor Grand pianos at about half. Write for full particulars. Cash or two years' time. Lyon & Healy, 45 Adams St., Chicago. We ship everywhere on approval Fullest guarantee with every piano.

Photography

GRAFLEX KODAKS PREMO CENTURY CAMERAS. Anastigmat Lenses of All Makes. If you will write telling size camera or lenses of interest, We will send special bargain list giving information. Herbert & Huesgen, Bargain Dispensers, 311 Madison Avenue, New York.

Patents and Lawyers

PATENTS SECURED or fee returned. Send sketch for free report as to patentability. Guide Book and What to Invent, with valuable List of Inventions Wanted, sent free. One Million Dollars offered for one invention; $16,000 for others. Patents secured by us advertised free in World's Progress: sample free. Evans, Wilkens & Company, 856 "F" Street, Washington, D. C.

PATENTS. ADVICE AND BOOKS free. Highest references. Best results. I procure patents that protect. Watson E. Coleman, Washington, D. C.

PATENT SENSE and PATENTS that Protect yield our clients enormous profits. Write us for Proof. Inventors lose millions through worthless patents. R. S. & A. B. Lacey, Dept. 62, Washington, D. C., Established 1869.

PENSIONS for Widows quickly obtained. For reliable advice, write E. H. Reeves, Atty., 202 5th St., Washington, D. C. Established 1884.

"PATENTS & Patent Possibilities," a reliable treatise on patents, mailed free to any address. H. S. Hill, 24-28 Columbian Bldg., Washington, D. C.

Music

WRITE THE WORDS FOR A SONG. My music is accepted by the best publishers. Free Booklet tells how to succeed. Send your poem for expert criticism free. First-class music only. My personal work on each. Satisfaction guaranteed. Arthur A. Penn, 36 Daly's Theatre Bldg., N. Y. My big 1909 Hit, "Always," postpaid 25c.

Coins, Stamps, Etc.

WE BUY U. S. and foreign coins many dates and denominations; premiums up to $5800. Also every kind of used stamps. Particulars free. May be worth many dollars, perhaps fortune to you. Money & Stamp Brokerage Co., 150 Nassau St., E 20, New York.

Books & Manuscripts

TO WRITERS. Do you wish to become known? We are offering a splendid proposition for meritorious long or short manuscripts. Aberdeen Publishing Co., 225 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Investigator

ARE you seeking information of friends or relatives New York City. Small cost complete details there condition. Investigations for all purposes. Sheffery, 136 6th Ave., N. Y.

Typewriters

SEND for my special "No-Risk" Offer and description of all standard typewriters from $10 to $50. Cash discounts or easy-as-rent payments. J. E. Grady, Pres., Rebuilt Typewriter Co., 82 N. May St., Chicago, Ill.

Miscellaneous

LUMBAGO frequently cured in one night by the Marconi Girdle. Mailed for one dollar and if not cured in three days money back by return mail. Marconi Girdle Co., Baltimore, Md.

HOTEL PIERREPONT

43-45-47 West 32d Street
NEW YORK

QUIET, REFINED AND MODERN

ABSOLUTELY FIREPROOF

Apartments of All Sizes, Both Furnished and Unfurnished

Transient Rates for Room and Bath, $2.50 per Day and More

EUROPEAN PLAN

HARRY L. BROWN



The Magnificent New

Hoffman House

MADISON SQUARE, NEW YORK

Absolutely Fireproof

The finest type of modern hotel architecture in New York. Beautifully furnished. Comfort and luxurious ease.

Located in the very heart of New York, where all the life and fashion of the metropolis centre.

Room.....$1.50 and $2.00
Room and Bath.....$2.50 and upward
Parlor, Bedroom and Bath.....$5.00

Service and cuisine far famed for their excellence. Delightful music afternoon and evening.

Send for particulars and handsome booklet.

A. A. CADDAGAN
Managing Director

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

Kleinert's

Kleinert's name on a Dress Shield is a Guarantee of Quality—A Merit Mark of Twenty-five Years' Standing

THE BEST

KLEINERT

There's a Shape and Size for Every Need

Dress Shields

A Guarantee with Every Pair

A Wonderful Automatic Pump

Supplying water for country homes is now an easy matter, and the expense is not very great. If there's a stream or spring on your land install a



NIAGARA Hydraulic Ram

and it will pump the water just where you want it. Better than a windmill or gasoline engine, because it doesn't get out of order and requires no attention. Write for booklet R and estimate. We furnish Caldwell Tanks and Towers.

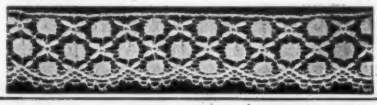
Niagara Hydraulic Engine Co.,
140 Nassau St., New York
Factory, Chester, Pa.



BIG BARGAINS IN LACES

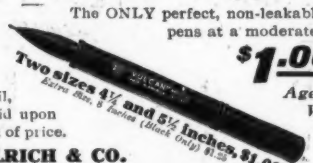
Write today for our Free Catalog. Showing complete line of newest patterns and novelties in Valenciennes, Mechlins, Torchons, Plauen laces, etc. We import and manufacture only Laces. If you want to save one-third on your laces, write today for Free Catalog F.

THE FRENCH LACE COMPANY
529-531-533 Broadway New York



RED OR BLACK **"Vulcan" Stylo Pens**

The ONLY perfect, non-leakable stylo pens at a moderate price.



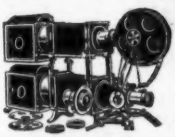
$1.00

Agents Wanted

By mail, postpaid upon receipt of price.

J. ULLRICH & CO.
Manufacturers
603 Thames Bldg., 135 Greenwich St., New York

IT PAYS BIG To Amuse The Public With Motion Pictures



NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY as our instruction Book and "Business Guide" tells all. **We furnish Complete Outfit with Big Advertising Posters, etc.** Humorous dramas brimful of fun, travel, history, religion, temperance work and songs illustrated. One man can do it. **Astonishing Opportunity** in any locality for a man with a little money to show in churches, school houses, lodge halls, theaters, etc. and to operate **Five Cent Theatres** in store rooms. **Motion Picture Films and Song Slides rented. Profits $10 to over $100 per night.** Others do it, why not you? It's easy; write to us, we'll tell you how. **Catalog free.**

Amusement Supply Co. 63 Chemical Bank Bldg., CHICAGO, ILL. 1035 K-Golden Gate Ave., San Francisco



START YOUR GAS ENGINE WITH THE MOTSINGER AUTO-SPARKER

and run it without the aid of batteries. Not a cheap magneto but the original high grade speed controlled friction driven dynamo. Perfectly insulated, **"water and dust-proof." Fully Guaranteed.** Operates the "make & break" and "jump spark." Charges all storage batteries for ignition and lighting on a small scale, perfectly with our special switch board in the circuit. Ten years actual service with over 35,000 Auto-sparkers in operation to testify to its merit.

Write for Catalog

MOTSINGER DEVICE MFG. CO.
94 Main St., PENDLETON, INDIANA, U.S.A.



RIDER AGENTS WANTED

in each town to ride and exhibit sample 1909 model. *Write for Special Offer.* FINEST GUARANTEED 1909 Models **$10 to $27** with Coaster-Brakes and Puncture-Proof tires. 1907 and 1908 MODELS **$7 to $12** ALL OF BEST MAKES..... *500 Second-Hand Wheels* *All makes and models, good as new* **$3 to $8** Great Factory Clearing Sale. We ***Ship on Approval*** *without a cent deposit, pay the freight* & allow **10 Days' Free Trial** **TIRES** coaster-brakes, parts, repairs and sundries, half usual prices. DO NOT BUY till you get our catalogue and offer. *Write now.*

MEAD CYCLE CO., Dept. H 110 CHICAGO



KILL THE HAIR ROOT PRIVATELY BY ELECTRICITY

You cannot permanently rid yourself of disfiguring hair by burning off the exposed part. You must kill the hair root, so that it cannot grow again. The only sure and safe way to do this is by electricity. This method is employed by all reputable physicians and dermatologists. **THE MAHLER APPLIANCE** is an electrical apparatus embodying the standard recognized method of electrolysis—simplified for home use. This kills the hair root by a steady, constant current of electricity, so faint that it cannot cause the slightest shock or scar, but sufficiently strong to destroy the life of the hair, so it can never grow again. You can use it with absolutely no danger of any kind. No knowledge of electricity required to operate. Send today for our book which fully describes the **MAHLER APPLIANCE** and contains evidences of the results achieved by women who have used it. This book free on request. We prepay postage in full. WRITE TO-DAY.

D. J. MAHLER, - 296 N MAHLER PARK, - EAST PROVIDENCE, R. I.

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



CLEAN-UP
to prevent
SUNBURN and TAN
(D. & R. Perfect Cold Cream on a hot wet cloth.)

"In Kansas City some years ago, the thermometer stood at 110° F for three days, heat reflecting from pavement and buildings all night. The more I washed my face, the worse it seemed. In desperation, I tried

DAGGETT & RAMSDELL'S
PERFECT COLD CREAM

"It cooled, soothed and healed my face, and has been used by my whole family ever since. For long drives, motoring and especially for a trip on water, it will prevent sunburn. There is no reason why a summer's exposure should spoil the beauty of a girl's face if she protects it with D. & R. Perfect Cold Cream." (Name on request). Traveler's tube 10c up; Jars 35c at best shops in America, Europe and the Orient.

Sample Mailed Free.

Daggett & Ramsdell
Dept. F
D. & R. Bldg.,
West 14th St.,
New York.



Prof. I. Hubert's
MALVINA CREAM
"The One Reliable Beautifier"

Positively cures Freckles, Sunburn, Pimples, Ringworm and all imperfections of the skin and prevents wrinkles. Does not **merely cover up** but **eradicates** them. **Malvina Lotion** and **Ichthyol Soap** should be used in connection with **Malvina Cream.** Cream, 50c; Lotion, 50c; Soap, 25c. At all druggists or sent postpaid on receipt of price. Send for testimonials.

PROF. I. HUBERT, TOLEDO, OHIO

Sent on Approval. Send No Money. $1.50
WE WILL TRUST YOU TEN DAYS. HAIR SWITCH
Send a lock of your hair, and we will mail a 2½ oz. 22-in. short stem fine human hair switch to match. If you find it a big bargain, remit $1.50 in ten days, or sell 3 and **get your switch free.** Extra shades a little more. Inclose 6c postage. Free beauty book showing latest style of hair dressing,—also high grade switches, pompadours, wigs, etc.



Anna Ayers, Dept. 250
17 Quincy St., Chicago



Hair Like This
FREE Let me send you a remarkable treatment for Baldness, Dandruff, Gray Hair, etc., at my own expense. It will surprise and delight you.

Write to-day to
WM. CHAS. KEENE, President,
LORRIMER INSTITUTE
Dept. 239, BALTIMORE, MD.

CUTICURA COMFORT



FOR IRRITATED SCALPS

Warm shampoos with Cuticura Soap followed by gentle applications of Cuticura to the hair roots clear the scalp of crusts, scales and dandruff, allay itching and irritation, destroy microscopic life, soften the scalp skin, stimulate the hair glands and promote hair growth. Cuticura Soap and Cuticura Ointment have become the world's favourites for the skin, scalp, hair and hands.

Sold throughout the world. Depots: London, 27, Charterhouse Sq.; Paris, 5, Rue de la Paix; Australia, R. Towns & Co., Sydney; India, B. K. Paul, Calcutta; So. Africa, Lennon, Ltd., Cape Town, etc.; U.S.A., Potter, Drug & Chem. Corp., Sole Props., 133 Columbus Ave., Boston.

☞Post Free, Cuticura Book on Skin and Scalp.

PETER'S THE ORIGINAL Milk Chocolate

Other brands are disappointing for they lack the smoothness, and rich chocolate flavor which has made PETER'S
The World's Favorite Chocolate

MEDAL OF HIGHEST AWARD
JAMESTOWN EXPOSITION



Add TONE to Your Stationery in the OFFICE, BANK, SCHOOL or HOME by using only the Washburne Patent Adjustable
"O.K" PAPER FASTENERS

There is genuine pleasure in their use as well as Perfect Security. Easily put on or taken off with the thumb and finger. Can be used repeatedly and *"they always work."* Made of brass, 3 sizes. Put up in brass boxes of 100 Fasteners each.

Handsome. Compact. Strong. No Slipping, NEVER!
All Stationers. Send 10c for sample box of 50, assorted. Illustrated booklet free. *Liberal discount to the trade.*
The O. K. Mfg. Co. Syracuse, N. Y. № 18

BARODA
ANY STYLE
DIAMONDS

FLASH LIKE GENUINE
Day or night. You can own a Diamond equal in brilliancy to any genuine Stone at one-thirtieth the cost.
BARODA DIAMONDS IN SOLID GOLD RINGS
stand acid test and expert examination. We guarantee them. See them first, then pay. Catalogue Free. Patent Ring Measure included for FIVE two-cent stamps.
THE BARODA COMPANY,
Dept. N. 250 North State St., Chicago.



Best grade cedar canoe for $20
Best grade of Cedar Canoe for $20.00. We sell direct saving you $20.00 on a canoe. All canoes cedar and copper fastened. We make all sizes and styles, also power canoes. Write for free catalog giving prices with retailer's profit cut out. We are the largest manufacturers of canoes in the world.
DETROIT BOAT CO., 178 Bellevue Ave., Detroit, Mich.

Oppenheimer Treatment
FOR ALCOHOLISM

Available. Give us your doctor's name and we will arrange to send the treatment to him for your private use.

Efficient. Is endorsed by physicians in all parts of the country.

Convenient. Requires no detention from business, no hypodermic injections, no publicity.

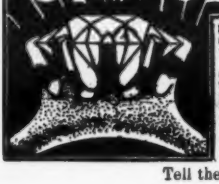
Safe. *Absolutely* no harmful secondary effects.

Private: Entire freedom from embarrassing publicity.

OPPENHEIMER INSTITUTE, 317 W. 57TH ST., NEW YORK.
G. Kindly send me in strictest confidence details of your treatment for alcoholism.
Name.....
Address.....

THE OPPENHEIMER INSTITUTE
317 WEST 57th STREET NEW YORK CITY

DIAMONDS ON CREDIT
LOFTIS SYSTEM



YOU CAN EASILY OWN A DIAMOND OR A WATCH

Send for our handsomely illustrated 1909 catalog containing 1500 beautiful reproductions of all that is correct and attractive in Diamonds, Watches, Jewelry. Then, in the privacy of your home or office, select whatever you desire.

We Send on Approval the goods you wish to see. If you like them, pay one-fifth the price on delivery and the balance in eight equal monthly payments. We make your credit as good as the millionaire's and give you the advantage of the lowest possible prices. We make $5 or $10 do the work that $50 does in a cash store, and give a written guarantee of value and quality. Catalog free. Write today.

Invest in a Diamond. It will pay better than stocks, bonds or savings bank interest, for Diamonds increase in value 10 to 30% annually, and your security is absolute. Our beautiful catalogue, which contains over 1,500 illustrations, is sent free. Write for it today. DO IT NOW.

LOFTIS BROS. & CO. THE OLD RELIABLE ORIGINAL DIAMOND AND WATCH CREDIT HOUSE. Established 1858.
Dept. F99 92 State St., Chicago, Ill.—Branches: Pittsburg & St. Louis

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

MENNEN'S
BORATED TALCUM TOILET POWDER



"Baby's Best Friend"

and Mamma's greatest comfort, **Mennen's** relieves and prevents **Prickly Heat, Chafing and Sunburn.**

For your protection the **genuine** is put up in **non-refillable boxes**—the **"Box that Lox,"** with **Mennen's** face on top. **Sold everywhere or by mail 25 cents**—*Sample free.* Guaranteed by the Gerhard Mennen's Chemical Co., under the Food and Drugs Act, June 30, 1906, Serial Number 1549.

Try Mennen's Violet (Borated) Talcum Toilet Powder—It has the scent of Fresh-cut Parma Violets. *Sample free.*

GERHARD MENNEN CO., Newark, N. J.

Mennen's Borated Skin Soap (blue wrapper) — Specially prepared for the nursery.
Mennen's Sen Yang Toilet Powder, Oriental Odor
No Samples
Sold only at Stores

ARNICA
TOOTH SOAP



Strong's Arnica Tooth Soap

Antiseptic, preserves while it beautifies—sweetens the breath—hardens the gums—whitens the teeth.

The metal package is convenient for travel or the home—no liquid or powder to spill or waste.

25c At All Druggists

Strong's Arnica Jelly

Keeps the skin soft and smooth; nothing better for chaps, pimples, and all eruptions. Sent postpaid for **25 cents.**

Guaranteed under the Food and Drugs Act, June 30, 1906; Serial No. 1612.

C. H. STRONG & CO., Chicago, U. S. A.

Rexall
TRADE NAME

"93" Hair Tonic



A treatment with Rexall "93" Hair Tonic will benefit the scalp and hair more than any other human agency. We are so positive of this, we print on every bottle:

"This preparation is guaranteed to give satisfaction; if it does not, come back and get your money—it belongs to you and we want you to have it."

Microbes infest the scalp, no matter how careful you may be. They create dandruff, loss of hair color; they destroy the hair roots, loosen the hair, and in time cause baldness. Once the life of the hair roots is extinguished, nothing can induce the growth of hair. Just so long as there is any life in the hair roots

Rexall "93" Hair Tonic

will prevent baldness and loss of hair color, and cause hair to grow naturally luxuriant. It is a safe, yet powerful, antiseptic, germicidal, nourishing tonic. It destroys microbes, cleanses scalp and hair, penetrates the scalp pores—ridding them of foreign matter; stimulates circulation around the hair roots and provides necessary hair nourishment. When the scalp is irritated or inflamed, it soothes, heals and brings about refreshing comfort.

Rexall "93" Hair Tonic is as essential to the toilet as is the tooth brush. It is ideal for preserving hair health for those who have it, as well as for restoring hair health to those who haven't it. Even the most sceptical person should not hesitate to try it at our risk. Two sizes—50c, and $1.00.

Rexall "93" Hair Tonic is sold and *guaranteed* by only one leading druggist in a place, whose store is known as

"The Rexall Store"

These stores are located in over 2,000 towns and cities in the United States. You cannot obtain Rexall "93" Hair Tonic elsewhere. If there is no Rexall Store in your town, upon receipt of $1.00 we will deliver to any address in the United States, express charges prepaid, a large sized bottle of Rexall "93" Hair Tonic.

UNITED DRUG CO.
44 Leon St., Boston, Mass.

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

Trade Mark Reg. U.S. Pat. Off.

Chiclets

REALLY DELIGHTFUL

The Dainty Mint Covered Candy Coated Chewing Gum

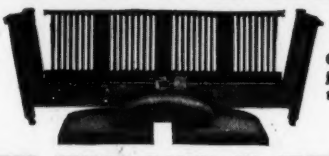
Particularly Desirable after Dinner

YOUR DRUGGIST KNOWS
that the best peppermint in the world is contained in Chiclets

Sold in 5¢ 10¢ and 25¢ packets
Frank H. Fleer & Company Inc.
Philadelphia, U.S.A. and Toronto, Can.

Save Over Half On Your Furniture.

As you receive it



Only six joints to make

SHIPPED KNOCK DOWN IN SECTIONS

Can be assembled by any woman. Easy to put together; no tool work necessary, no skill required, cushions completely finished. Send for catalog No. 8 today, which shows over 40 different pieces.

BROOKS MANUFACTURING CO.,
Estab. 1901. 1406 Ship St., Saginaw, Michigan
Originators of the "Knock-Down" system of home furnishing.

AINSLEE'S MAGAZINE
is printed with inks manufactured by
W. D. WILSON PRINTING INK CO., LTD.,
17 SPRUCE STREET, NEW YORK CITY



Geisha Diamonds

THE LATEST SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY

Bright, sparkling, beautiful. For brilliancy they equal the genuine, standing all test and puzzle experts. One twentieth the expense. Sent free with privilege of examination. For particulars, prices, etc., address

THE R. GREGG MFG. & IMPT. CO.
Dept. G 52-58 W. Jackson Boul., Chicago, Ill.

Urn Style



Manning-Bowman "METEOR" Coffee Percolator

Pot Style



—For making coffee as it *should* be made—with *all* the coffee aroma, flavor and goodness and *none* of the harmful element.

The grounds *cannot* steep or boil as in the old-fashioned coffee pot—*because they are kept above the liquid.* The boiling water is *sprayed over them,* carrying off only the enjoyable part. No uncertainty—no failures—coffee always right—always appetizing—always healthful.

Made in Urn Style with alcohol burner for table use, and in Coffee-Pot Style for stove use. Very strong and handsome—real **MANNING-BOWMAN QUALITY.** Over 100 styles and sizes. All leading dealers. Write for booklet "F-28."

MANNING, BOWMAN & CO., Meriden, Conn.
(Makers of Manning-Bowman Denatured Alcohol Gas Stoves and "Eclipse" Bread Mixers)

DIAMONDS ON CREDIT

2317 $25 · 2189 $50 · 2132 $60 · 2113 $50 · 2315 $35 · 2162 $50 · 2110 $35 · 2158 $30 · $60 2306 · $25 2198 · 2160 $40 · 2380 $25

20% DOWN—10% PER MONTH

Why wait for your Diamond until you have saved the price? Pay for it by the Lyon Method. Lyon's prices are fully 20% lower than any others. Lyon's Diamonds are guaranteed perfect blue-white, imported in the rough, cut and polished here to save import duties and middlemen's profits. A written guarantee accompanies each Diamond. You have the option for exchange at any time at full purchase price. All goods sent prepaid for inspection. **10% discount for cash.** Send now—today—for our catalogue No. 17, splendidly illustrated. *Established 1843.*

J. M. LYON & CO. **71 Nassau St., New York**

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

Own a Perfect Vacuum Cleaner

THE SURPRISE SUCTION SWEEPERS

are the only effective vacuum cleaners operated by one person by hand.

All dust and germ-carrying dirt is drawn *off the floor* right through the carpets and rugs into the machine. The results are positive and actual.

They are the cheapest and most effective sweepers in the market.

Can be operated by a child.

Weigh less than five pounds.

Will wear indefinitely.

Brass Mounted $10.00

Enameled $5.00

UTILITY IMPORT & EXPORT COMPANY,

30 East 20th Street, New York.

Branch, Fourth Ave., Bet. 20th and 21st Sts.

Write for Booklet "H" or call.





ROAST MEATS

hot or cold, are given just that "finishing touch" if seasoned with

LEA & PERRINS SAUCE

THE ORIGINAL WORCESTERSHIRE

It perfects the flavor of Soups, Fish, Steaks, Chops, Veal and Salads. It gives relish to an otherwise insipid dish.

Beware of Imitations.

JOHN DUNCAN'S SONS, Agents, New York

Just You Taste It Once



CAILLER'S is so exquisitely rich—so deliciously smooth—so "different" from ordinary chocolates, that its taste is a revelation.

CAILLER'S is made from the choicest of cocoa beans—the purest of refined sugar—the richest, creamiest milk from the mountain valleys of Switzerland.

CAILLER'S is more than a delicious dainty—it is a real food for children and grown-ups. The most capricious palate never tires of

Cailler's
GENUINE
SWISS MILK
CHOCOLATE

nor does the most delicate stomach find the least difficulty in thoroughly digesting it.

For social functions and for every-day needs—**CAILLER'S** delights, nourishes and satisfies. Sold everywhere in 5c, 10c, 15c, 30c cakes and upwards.

Save the tissue-paper wrappers—a ½ lb. cake of CAILLER'S will be sent you, postpaid, upon receipt of 100 wrappers.

FREE As soon as you have read this send your name and address on attached coupon for a liberal sample.

J. H. FREYMANN

Agent for the U. S. A. **60 University Place, New York**

CUT ON THIS LINE — COUPON NO. 104

Name.....

Address.....

Kindly send me, postpaid, a free sample of CAILLER'S Genuine Swiss Milk Chocolate at the above address.

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

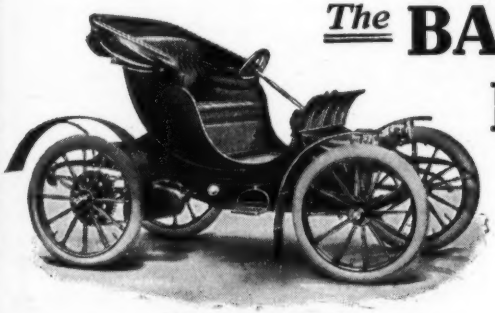
LIQUEUR PÈRES CHARTREUX

—GREEN AND YELLOW—

The original and genuine Chartreuse has always been and still is made by the Carthusian Monks (Pères Chartreux), who, since their expulsion from France, have been located at Tarragona, Spain; and, although the old labels and insignia originated by the Monks have been adjudged by the Federal Courts of this country to be still the exclusive property of the Monks, their world-renowned product is nowadays known as "Liqueur Pères Chartreux."

At first-class Wine Merchants, Grocers, Hotels, Cafes.
Batjer & Co., 45 Broadway, New York, N. Y.
Sole Agents for United States.





The BAILEY ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Simple Safe Sturdy

PRICE $2000

The Ideal Vehicle for Suburbs and City

SEND FOR DETAILS

S. R. BAILEY & CO., Inc., Amesbury, Mass.

MAKERS OF THE

FAMOUS BAILEY PNEUMATIC ROADWAGON

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



On Your Shopping List

TO-MORROW

10,000 Jars

of the famous Pompeian face cream are daily sold to discriminating women and men in all parts of the world. Pompeian Massage Cream enjoys this tremendous popularity, because it is unequalled for making and keeping people good-looking, clean-looking, young-looking. City's grime and country's dust closes pores—makes the skin sallow and full of blackheads. Pompeian cleanses the pores, invigorates the skin and gives it a clear, soft, and naturally fresh appearance.



Pompeian Massage Cream

also removes wrinkles and prevents their coming. Double-chins are reduced by use of Pompeian. No grease to grow hair; no stickiness in Pompeian. Write Pompeian on your shopping list *now*, or if you wish to try before you buy, *to-day*—before you forget it—

SEND FOR OUR SAMPLE JAR

with which to try out for yourself the wonderful pore-cleansing and skin-improving qualities of Pompeian Massage Cream. This sample is not for sale at stores. The illustrated booklet is an individual guide for the proper care of the skin. Send 10 cents in silver or stamps (only U. S. stamps accepted) to cover cost of postage and packing. If your dealer doesn't keep it, we'll send a 50-cent or $1 jar, postpaid, on receipt of price.

THE POMPEIAN MANUFACTURING COMPANY, 34 Prospect Street, Cleveland, Ohio

JAP-A-LAC

Reg. U.S. Pat. Off.

"WEARS LIKE IRON"

"Big Improvements made in a little way"



HOW MANY THINGS

in your house which could and ought to be refinished with a beautiful glossy surface that "wears like iron,"—if you only knew how.

JAP-A-LAC requires neither work nor technical knowledge. A child can apply it, although maturer judgment and good taste in the selection of colors are needed to insure harmony of tones.

JAP-A-LAC is the hardest, most durable and lustrous colored varnish made. Applied according to directions it "sets" hard as adamant with a mirrorlike surface and "Wears Like Iron."

JAP-A-LAC is made in sixteen beautiful colors for refinishing every kind of Woodwork, Bric-a-brac, Chandeliers, Floors, Furniture and every painted or varnished surface from cellar to garret.

JAP-A-LAC has no substitute.

FOR SALE BY PAINT, HARDWARE AND DRUG DEALERS

If your dealer does not keep JAP-A-LAC, send us his name, with 10c to cover cost of mailing and we will send a free sample, quarter pint can of any color (except gold which is 25c) to any point in the United States.

JAP-A-LAC Model Floor Graining Process solves the problem of "*What shall I do with my old carpeted floor to make it sanitary and refined?*" Your *Painter* can do it at a little expense or you can do it yourself. Insist on *JAP-A-LAC*.

Write for illustrated booklet containing interesting information and beautiful color card. Free on request.

THE GLIDDEN VARNISH CO.

2601 Rockefeller Bldg. Cleveland, O., U. S. A.

Our Green Label Line of clear varnishes is the highest quality manufactured. Its use insures perfect results. Ask your paint dealer.

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



The Palmer-Singer Six-Sixty, a 6 cyl. 60 H. P. speed car for Motor Sportsmen, is the finest, classiest motor car which it is possible to build. In power and speed it is a whirlwind. In efficiency and durability it has so proven its value to 1908 owners that we have been unable to supply the demand. If you want one this Spring visit us SOON.

Sixty-five Miles an Hour Guaranteed

Single Rumble . .	**$3,100**	**Surrey Body . .**	**$3,250**
Four Buckets . .	**$3,250**	**Baby Tonneau . .**	**$3,300**

PALMER & SINGER MFG. CO.
1620 Broadway, New York City

Please send color catalog to ...

Name.....

Address.....

City.....

State.....

AINSLEE'S

We want you to know about this car and about the rest of the Palmer-Singer line. We will gladly send you free our 1909 catalog if you will fill out the coupon, and mail it to us. This catalog is an expensive one. It is printed in five colors and is a piece of book-making worthy of the cars it represents. It is full of information which you will find of value, no matter what car you **do** buy.

PALMER & SINGER MFG. CO.
1620-22-24 Broadway, NEW YORK
1321 Michigan Avenue, CHICAGO
New York and Chicago Agents the Simplex

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



Wherever you see this sign, it stands for civilization. It is the sign of one of the most powerful influences for broadening human intelligence.

The universal service of the Bell companies has provided it—has spread an even, highly developed civilization through the land. It has carried the newest impulses of development from town to town and from community to community.

Bell telephone service has brought the entire country up to the same instant of progress.

It has unified the Nation.

As soon as a new town springs up in the woods, on the plains, at the cross-roads, or walled in by mountains, the signpost of civilization is erected—the sign of the Bell. Telephone service puts the people of that town into communication with one another and with the outside world.

It puts the town on the map.

You can see this march of progress right in your own neighborhood. Every little while some neighbor has a Bell telephone put in. If you have one, every new subscriber enlarges the scope of your personal contact. If you have not, every new telephone makes you the more isolated—the more cut off from the activities about you.

Just as individuals in your locality use the telephone for mutual convenience, so towns and cities in *different* localities are served and advanced by the long distance telephone.

Each contributes to, and benefits by, the broad universal service of the Bell.

The busy man who wants to accomplish more than he is now doing can well afford to make use of the Bell Long Distance service. It is the most efficient office assistant imaginable. Every Bell Telephone is a Long Distance station.

The American Telephone and Telegraph Company
And Associated Companies

One Policy, One System, Universal Service

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



The New 88 Note ANGELUS PLAYER PIANO

In purchasing a player-piano or exchanging your old-style piano, for the modern one which every one can play, (as you will soon find it expedient to do) it is to your best interests to secure for yourself the finest and most completely equipped instrument it is possible to have. Month after month, we have been advancing argument after argument in favor of the ANGELUS Player-Piano. We have given you reason after reason why it is better, and why, from every practical view-point, its possession is infinitely more desirable than that of any other instrument of its kind. To these reasons, we now add still another.

The ANGELUS Player-Piano, instead of restricting the user to the incomplete 65-note range, is now built to play the full 88 notes, the entire compass of the piano keyboard. This new, and extremely important feature, gives you exactly the same playing range as that of the concert-pianist—the full 88-note range—from the lowest note in the bass, to the highest note in the treble. The new 88-note ANGELUS plays all 88-note and 65-note music rolls. This gives the user a far more comprehensive selection of music than is available for any other player-piano.

The *Phrasing Lever*, the *Melodant*, the *Diaphragm Pneumatics*, *Melody Buttons*, *Artistyle Music-Rolls*, and the *Duplex Spool*, are other patented and exclusive advantages of the ANGELUS. These comprise the most complete and most invaluable playing-equipment possessed by any player-piano made today. It will therefore, be to your ultimate satisfaction to hear and play the ANGELUS instruments yourself, before you are led into purchasing any other.

Write for our beautiful new booklet, and name of convenient dealer.

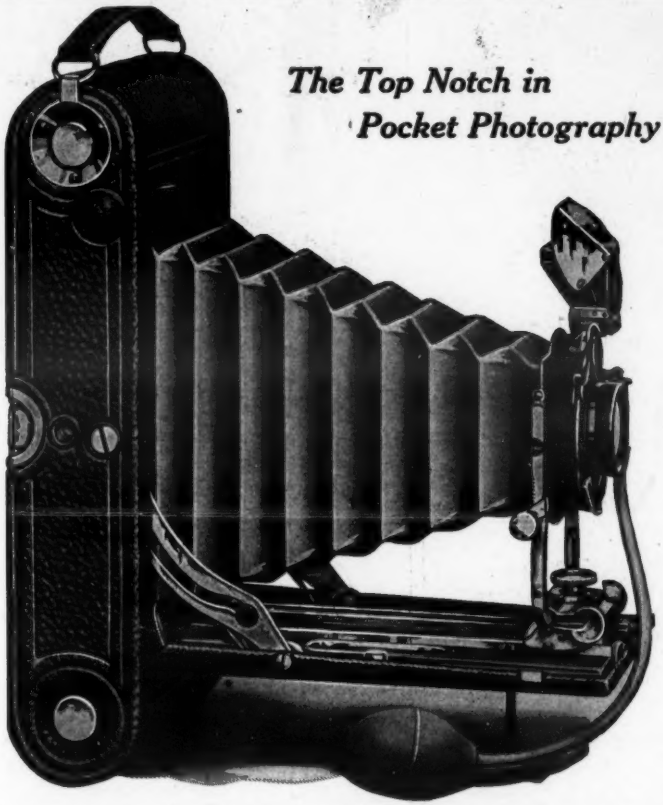
THE WILCOX & WHITE CO. — Regent House

Business Established in 1877. — Regent Street

MERIDEN, CONN. — London

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

IF IT ISN'T AN EASTMAN, IT ISN'T A KODAK.



The Top Notch in Pocket Photography

The 3A Folding Pocket Kodak

Every detail of design, material and workmanship has been worked out with the utmost care to produce a camera of the widest capabilities, yet it retains the Kodak simplicity—and "Kodak" you know, means photography with the bother left out.



A feature of the 1909 model is the Kodak Ball Bearing Shutter, in which we have embodied a new principle in shutter construction. The leaves are in five segments, mounted entirely on ball bearings and open in the form of a star, thus admitting a much greater amount of light in a given time than any other between the lens type of shutter. Practically frictionless and with a precision and smoothness that are a mechanical delight.

No. 3A Folding Pocket Kodak, pictures 3¼ x 5½, $20.00.

Kodak Catalogue free at the dealers or by mail.

EASTMAN KODAK COMPANY,

ROCHESTER, N. Y., *The Kodak City.*

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



Beauty

Doctors regard beauty from the point of view of health, and tell you that a good natural complexion and a fair, soft skin are necessary essentials of beauty. They never disagree about that, nor do they disagree about the merits of

Pears' Soap

which is the most perfect beautifying agent known, being pure in every particle and possessing those special and unique qualities which render the skin pure, clear and of exquisite softness. The beauties of six generations have acknowledged PEARS' to be

The Best Aid to Beauty

From the Doctor's Point of View



OF ALL SCENTED SOAPS PEARS' OTTO OF ROSE IS THE BEST.

"All rights secured."

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

GEM
JUNIOR
Safety Razor

WITH NEW BAR



A Few FACTS

Concerning the Perfect Shave

The *BLADE* is the *THING* to consider in a razor, for *IT does the shaving.* The *BLADE* first made the fame of the *GEM Junior Safety Razor.* We not only *originated* the Modern Safety Razor, but for over thirty years have manufactured the *finest of Safety Razors.* We put that experience into making the *GEM Junior Safety Razor BLADE,* and imitators have not discovered our secret!

You don't throw away a gold pen; you wipe it, and *it's as good as new.* After using a *GEM Junior Safety Razor BLADE* several times, strop it—the *steel* is *superior,* the *temper* and *edge so fine,* that stropping makes it *as good as ever*—or, *we* will do the stropping—*New Blades for Old, 7 exchanged for 25 cents.*

With any other razor, it is necessary to smoothen out the creases of the skin with one hand. Our *NEW BAR* (protected by patent) does this for you, raising the hairs just ahead of the cutting edge, *which makes perfect shaving a simple matter.* The keen blade runs flush to the skin, but never harms it, leaving the surface *as smooth as the palm of the hand.*

The *GEM Junior Safety Razor* is made and finished in the *best* style, of the *best* materials and by the *best* workmanship.

The *One Dollar Outfit,* complete, includes a handsomely finished *nickel-plated frame, extension* and *stropping handles, 7 selected blades of the finest steel,* and a *substantial case.*

SET COMPLETE

$1.00



EXTRA SET, 7 BLADES, 50c

See that you get a sealed package

If your dealer is behind the times, or offers a substitute, send us One Dollar and we will mail the complete GEM Junior outfit, postpaid, to your address.

Booklet "Shaveology" free on request

GEM CUTLERY COMPANY

34 Reade Street New York

360 Fremont Street, San Francisco, Cal.

564 Washington Street, Boston, Mass.

30 years in business

We are the original Modern Safety Razor Makers

COLGATE'S TALC POWDER

WITH SIX HOLE SIFTER

(Another Improvement)



ONCENTRATES ON THE SPOT

CONOMY:—No scattering, no waste, sprinkling dress or coat. The position d number of the holes put the distribu- n of powder always under your control.

ou can both concentrate on a cut or the y fold of baby's skin, and just as easily read it over a large surface by merely ving the hand.

REGULATES THE FLOW

OUBLE ECONOMY:—By turning the sifter top e six holes are made smaller or larger. This permits e most careful economy, and is possible only with **is non-leaking screw** top.

HE SAFETY POWDER IN THE SAVING BOX.

he antiseptic and soothing ingredients of our Talc Powders, Violet, ashmere Bouquet and Dactylis are prepared from formula of an eminent ysician. Their exquisite perfumes also are **antiseptic.**

OLGATE ECONOMY is shown not only in this new Talc Box, but also in our **Ribbon ental Cream;** which in our now famous tube "Comes out a ribbon, lies flat on the brush," with ly half as much flow of cream as from the old round-mouth tube.

For trial size of either Talc or Cream, send 4 cents in stamps.

E COULDN'T IMPROVE THE POWDER, so WE HAVE AGAIN IMPROVED THE BOX.

COLGATE & CO., Dept. A, 55 John St., New York.

Makers of the famous Cashmere Bouquet Toilet Soap.